Remembering

BING

Edited by REG BRISTO

Actor, Singer, Humanitarian

A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS

THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

No. 55

SITUATION VACANT...

There's a void at the top, in the world of song,
And no one to fill it has come along.
And its certain that no one ever will,
For who could replace that Crosby trill?
He stood at the top, a man unique,
And no other could even approach his peak.
A giant of records and radio,
And everyone followed the 'Roads' where he'd go!
As a man, he was friendly, and down to earth,
As an actor, he'd bring out both drama and mirth,
Living, it seemed, so casual - so breezy,
He made it all look so terribly easy!
There's a void at the top which will stay unfilled -
No other singer will ever be billed
At the pyramid's apex, where he reigned as king,
For there never can be.....Another Bing....

Norman Toogood,
Southampton.

MEMORIES.....are made of this....

Looking back, I think it was SWANEE RIVER that set the seal, as it were, on this phenemenon that was Bing Crosby...we'd heard some lovely songs from this fascinating new singer. Even parents, certainly mine, who had given him guarded approval after his startling debut, were wholehearted Bing fans when they had heard him sing this lovely old song. Popular songs of the day, even those tailored for Mr. Crosby, were one thing - but when those lovely tones, that rich timbre, were turned to SWANEE RIVER, all doubts about 'another crooner' were gone... It was 'Old Bing' - the 'old' being merely a term of intimacy, of affection. Then came ADESTE FIDELIS, SILENT NIGHT, DEAR OLD GIRL...JUST A'WEARYING FOR YOU and scores, hundreds, of other lovely songs. But, I feel SWANEE RIVER was a milestone...much as I applaud the youngsters of our circle...but, sadly, they cannot recapture the wonderful memory of hearing, and then seeing, Bing render this lovely old song....

N.T.K.

During the War years Bing made my life seem worth living - aye, even when I was taking part in the Battle of the Atlantic.None of us knew what the next minute would bring on those convoys. Nineteen days and nights on one crossing, with life-jackets ON, day and night...relaxation,when it was possible, Bing's records...

Geo. Moorcroft
(Liverpool)

From experience, I can recognise the traumas of Bing's life in SEASONS...life's disappointments, tragedies, triumphs...all there, even if Bing himself would never comment on them...

Frank Challenger
(Ripley, Derby)

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"BING" is dedicated to the imperishable memory of a great man and an entertainer beyond compare....

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The above are pleased to hear of news/queries in their respective spheres.

A "X" in the box indicates that your subscription is due with this issue: [X]

The list of names for THE CROSBY YEARS is being submitted to the publishers, Hamish Hamilton at their request in mid-February. They have said the books will be posted before general publication. Price to members of ICC is £7.95 with no P & P charge representing a discount of £1.00 on the normal price of the book.

The suggestion in the last issue regarding our main Annual event at Leeds that it be changed to a lunch was quickly disposed of when it was pointed out that many members would still have to travel overnight or stay overnight in order to be there! Changing it from a dinner to a lunch, therefore, merely changed the night of staying in leeds!

Any members interested in the very worthwhile activity of hospital broadcasting should get in touch with STAN AUSTIN, 58 Pear Tree Aven., Yiewsley, West Drayton, Midd'x if they are within reach of Harefield Hospital.

Many members have deplored a non-Bing AND a non-BING Christmas! Sorry, it was a physical impossibility to get an issue out in December following that of November. Seems there was a Crosby Christmas Show - in America. Neither the BBC or IYV appear to have been interested enough to acquire it.

The medallion replicas of the Palladium plaque ordered as a result of the previous issue of BING were to have been despatched before Christmas, but that doesn't appear to have happened and we are ascertaining the reason for the hold-up, although they may well have been posted by the time this reaches members.

Original material c THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE, 1980.

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On page 25 of this issue is an article entitled A VERY GOOD ROUND. It is prefaced by an explanation of why we do not slavishly reproduce all the items of news we see about the Crosby family. An excellent example appeared in the William Hickey column of THE DAILY EXPRESS on January 3 - we might ask in parenthesis why modern newspapers find it necessary to use so-called 'gossip' columnists in this day and age - entitled GARY SINGS ON BING - AND HE GETS £50,000 FOR AN EXPOSE OF HIS 'TYRANNICAL' DAD. The story contains such as 'Dear old Bing Crosby's happy-go-lucky imagine doesn't look as if it will last out 1980'. And 'A hair-raising memoir about what the Old Groaner was like at home - when his toupee was hung up and his pipes stuck firmly in the rack', or 'Gary gives Bing's sunny, priest-like personality quite a bashing' and 'He draws a picture of him as an unyielding, tyrannical father who could not communicate his love for his songs and says he beat the boys with a leather belt and humiliated Gary by calling him nicknames such as 'Fatso'.'

Enlighteningly, if unwittingly, this story went on to say that Gary became an alcoholic, while Lindsay suffered a nervous breakdown in 1963. Philip at the time of Bing's death wasn't talking to Gary and Dennis had all but lost touch with his brothers. It will easily be understood that they weren't 'little boys' when these things happened.

We have always believed that Bing and his wife were, in the 30's, set an almost impossible task to bring up a family of four boys in the fierce blaze of fame and publicity that enveloped them. With almost every hour of his time mortgaged to radio, records and films, and subjected to a public searchlight their life at times must have seemed unendurable. Yet Bing set about it in the way HE had been brought up, and in the way he undoubtedly thought was right.

After more than 50 years of happy singing, happy films, happy radio, television - 50 glorious years of a superlatively unique career, it will take more than a book by Gary Crosby, or anyone else for that matter to besmirch Bing's undoubtedly true image of a man of sterling character, humour, humanity - and unequalled talent. Books that say otherwise will certainly reflect more on the writers than on Mr. Crosby. But, because of our cynicism of what newspapers say, especially gossip-columnists, it is only fair to point out that Gary has spoken in much different vein on several occasions, particularly in the TV tribute feature on Bing.

And so, changing the subject, we reach the 'Eighties! Odd to think about it. Up to now, the '80's has always meant the 1880's! We reflect on the decade of the 70's in this issue - its delights and its enormous tragedies, for it was a grievous decade for show business.

On a purely personal note, short of horrific snow-falls your Editor should have resumed work by the time you receive this after an eleven months' absence for the reasons you know! It has been a long, painful, process. Walking is ungainly and far from secure, but indicates real progress. My sincere thanks for continuing kind letters and encouragement especially over Christmas...ingenious cards, calendars, cassettes. Great people, Crosby people! AND, we did escape the floods, thanks to being fairly high up and a fair distance from the angry rivers in flood...but the waters weren't far away. I hope we ALL have a good 1980, despite the portents!

PLAQUE COMMEMORATING BING UNVEILED AT A

SECRET SESSION AT THE PALLADIUM

At least, that's how it seems. As members know, the plaque unveiled by Bob Hope commemorating Bing's performances there was a prototype to fit in with Bob's presence in London. The real plaque was finally installed early in December. And this momentous event took place in the presence of barely a handful of people. Furthermore, none of the media were invited, thus there were no reports on TV or radio, or in the newspapers.

It is impossible to understand this lack of publicity on the part of the Palladium management - if only for their own publicity gain, tho' its possible they feel that august theatre no longer needs publicity. Not a reporter was in sight. More important, there were no invitations to ICC members or indeed to Crosby admirers in general. Many of our members would have wished to have been present, especially perhaps, those who had worked hard on the idea of installing such a memento, and these would include a lot of people - Trevor Wagstaffe (Hornchurch), Les Gaylor, Mrs. Renee Chester....ah Rene, thereby hangs a happier tale.

For, thanks to her friendship with Mr. Philip Nathan, the sculptor of the plaque, Renee DID attend and thus the ICC did in fact have a representative present. And this devoted lady has told us of her utter astonishment to find so few people present and a complete absence of publicity.

But whatever the reasons for keeping the affair almost secret, the finished plaque is now an accomplished fact and adorns the foyer of the London Palladium; Sir Lew Grade, Louis Benjamin, Mr. Nathan and our Renee seem to have been the only ones present.

The inscription on the plaque - on the wall on the left as you pass from the foyer into the auditorium - reads:

> BING CROSBY
>
> whose legendary contribution to the whole world of entertainment was marked by a special 50th Anniversary season at the London Palladium
> Sept. 10th - Oct. 8th 1977

Renee tells us that the plaque does indeed look really handsome and is a fine memorial to Bing. We might mention, too, that Renee is unlikely to forget 1979 - the year in which she met Bob Hope, Ted Rogers (not forgetting Leslie Gaylor!) and attended both deremonies at the London Palladium.

We can't help wondering if the Palladium management ever saw, or were aware of, the remarkable tribute Bing paid to the Palladium.

It was contained in an article which appeared in the TORONTO STAR of Canada, and we're grateful to Bryan Stevens of that town who was kind enough to send us copies. It appears overleaf.

THE LAST OF ITS KIND, THE GREAT PALLADIUM PLAYS ON

OLD LONDON TOWN

TORONTO STAR SPECIAL

LONDON—The late Bing Crosby was playing the Palladium again, an event which he said was 'like getting a transfusion with a pint of royal blood'. Each night for two weeks he walked on stage and told his audiences that he would render up a medley of best known tunes from his movies.

Bing would lean casually against the accompanying piano and hold forth for an unbelievable 42 non-stop tunes.

When applause would not die down, Bing would encore, ad lib, encore again. He was polite. He was flattered. Like a thousand other entertainers -- singers, dancers, stand-up comics, mimics, heavies, magicians, acrobats, jugglers, tumblers, combo, animal acts, pantomimists - Bing found the broad and deep Palladium stage to be the heart of true show business.

THE LAST STAGE

The last time Bing played the 2,317-seat Palladium was on a soft autumn night in October, 1977. He had been there for two sold-out weeks. Kathy Crosby was with him and so were their children. Occasionally all of the Crosbys would climb on stage and, along with Rosemary Clooney, sing and dance. Kathy said during that fortnight that they had never been happier.

Bing kept no money for his performances. Every penny went to help gifted young performers and the children of less successful performers.

Bing had played golf almost daily at Virginia Water, Wentworth, Sunningdale, Hendon and the other great courses around London and this gave him his trinity of happiness - family, golf and playing the Palladium.

The run ended. Bing went down to Spain to take the sun and play a bit more golf. On a Spanish golf course he was stricken and soon died.

The last stage in the happy life of the old trooper is the last stage of its kind in the English-speaking world. There are stages in Las Vegas but performers there are nothing more than drawing cards for the dice table and roullette wheels. TV studios have stages and so do radio studios. And, there are far lesser stages in the English music hall world.

But none is in a class with the Palladium, the famous old London music hall just to the side of Oxford Circus and up a bit from Piccadilly.

The Palladium only books the best for its year-round billings. Besides, there is the unmatched tradition of the Palladium, just as there is the tradition of golf at the Royal and Ancient Club in St. Andrews, Scotland; racing tradition at Churchill Downs; tennis tradition at Wimbledon and opera at La Scala.

Just now the Palladium is preparing a season that will top its own top-of-the-variety-line performances. The Palladium will be 70 years old next year and fine artists - American, Canadian, British and Continental - are accepting one third of half the money they usually get to play the Palladium in its anniversary year.

Actually, there's nothing new about this. The Palladium has always gotten the artists it wanted, often at knockdown prices. Two simple traditions tell something of the differences between the Palladium and less variety houses: Heavy brass name plaques that go on dressing-room doors of stars are kept and treasured by the players as though they were Oscars; departing artists write on mirrors of their dressing rooms good luck messages to incoming players.

The Palladium is choosy in booking performers and rarely does a show bomb. Mickey Rooney did bomb on his last appearance because, it is said, he would not bend a bit, set up rapport with his audience as an artist is expected to do. Non-Americans could not understand his jokes. Over the years the Palladium has revived many faltering careers by putting fine artists who are not quite over the hill into an expertly operated variety youse on one of the finest stages in the world and in front of knowledgeable audiences night-after-night. That brings out the best.

In a quote markedly similar to Bing's, Bob Hope once said that playing the Palladium is 'like pumping out the old blood, pumping in the new'.

Bob has played the Palladium many times, as recently as this Spring. Ethel Merman revived here. So did Josephine Baker, Lena Horne, Gracie Fields, Noel Coward, Debbie Reynolds, Vic Damone, Danny Kaye and Judy Garland preferred the Palladium to any other stage altho' both suffered severe stage fright before going on.

Laurence Olivier, the most prestigious actor in the English language, plays the Palladium occasionally. Several of Frankie Sinatra's many retirement performances have been here on the stage with its three concentric revolves and the finest theatre light in the world.

Younger artists like the Palladium's acoustics and, as Engelbert Humperdinck says 'the fact that you feel you can almost touch the big audiences, even those up in the royal box on the west side'.

Only an occasional performer tries to slip smut material into an act. This is just now allowed. Punk rock is not permitted. And, at the other end of the entertainment spectrum, classical performances are rarely staged.

This venerable old house, like a good politician, shapes its acts to fit the great mass of people, the middlebrow middle class. That's where the voters are and that's where the mass of ticket-buyers are.

The Palladium opened Dec 26, 1910 with the specially composed Palladium March bringing up the curtain for the first time. The place was special even then and even in London, capital of the British Empire and the most important city in the world. Two innovations: all seats could be tipped up and there was carpeting throughout. No other house had either.

Two large balconies and three tiers of boxes - including the large crested royal box where command performance activities take place - hang over the stallfs of this Edwardian masterpiece with its heavy overlays of Victoriana. The place is very red, velveted, gilded, jazzed-up, ornate, brassy, rocco here and Empire there.

Vaudeville and music halls are now grown few so people turn increasingly to the tube and movies. This sad turn leaves, almost alone, the London Palladium, the only house remaining that consistently provides the very best talent year around.

Londonsome as the London Palladium is, it is a special place that will - with hardly any question - flourish for decades to come. And one of the big reasons is the entertainers like to play the Palladium just as much as the ticket buyers like to watch them.

Editor: Thus the Palladium as presented to Canadian readers. There is no doubting the worldwide reputation of this truly the last of the variety houses; and we have all marvelled at the amazing sequence of events that resulted in Bing appearing there twice in the last two years of his long and legendary career. Perhaps the Palladium has become part of the folk-lore of London like St. Pauls, Westminster and the Tower? Yet who would deny that it needs a fair degree of imagination, not to mention enthusiasm, to describe its entrance as impossing. In fact, it has always seemed a little insignificant - from the outside, that is - tucked away in that little side-street - Argyll Street, to be precise. The hordes of provincial visitors who went there for the very first time just to see Bing must have thought so though it must be admitted that that wonderful and magnificent sign: BING CROSBY certainly made the whole edifice that much more magnificent. And imposing.

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It only remains to add that the article was written by STERLING G. SLAPPEY - to whom, and to the TORONTO STAR, our grateful acknowledgements.

LAY OFF - YOU 'BRITISH BING CROSBYS'!

There are bound to be some members who read BING from back to front - in the same way that they read newspapers. It is not an uncommon procedure. It will be a real pity with this particular feature, however, if they read its origin, not to mention its author, for it will spoil the astonishment we are sure it will generate.

If the much-used term "British Bing Crosby" were used in the metaphorical sense, signifying that the singer is as great in England as Bing Crosby is in America, I should have little to say about it. In any case that claim might be strongly contested between England's most popular radio 'style singers'. Notice how I avoid the word crooner. My main point of argument is that so many British singers have, no doubt, earned for themselves such a title with a fair claim to it, for the simple reason that they try, to the best of their ability to imitate the inimitable Crosby.

The claim to the billing-matter 'The British Bing Crosby' is honest enough - for they are mimics and some are very good imics at that! Some people have a natural gift for mimicry. Notice how certain people can tell you a funny story in dialect - Scots, Hebrew, Italian, Negro, etc. almost like a native! This is just a gift. And in the same way a man can imitate a dog-bark, cok-crow, lion-roar, etc. with his voice. It is possible to imitate different celebrities - Greta Garbo, Zazu Pitts, Maurice Chevalier and, likewise - BING CROSBY!

The fascinating timbre and the artistry behind Bing Crosby's voice was noticeable when he was one of Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys. Those solo passages he used to sing had a thrill all their own. Crosby 'had something'. He became the most famous singer of popular music in the world - the jazz counterpart of Caruso. This, remember, he did in spite of the tremendous popularity of singers such as Rudy Vallee, who were enjoying success with a tremendous fan public.

But Crosby's greatness is due entirely to his art. To copy his voice and characteristics, including those little 'trills' and 'slurs' should not be extremely difficult. The main essential for the perfect imitation, it seems to me, is a RESEMBLANCE of the natural voice of the mimic to that of Bing Crosby. That booming resonance in the lower register cannot be imitated unless it is within the range of your voice and you have the natural quality there.

...As a vocalist, if you have not the temperament to express the emotions of a song you may just as well give up singing. Which brings us back to Bing Crosby. If there is one aspect of Bing that all the successful singers of today do certainly

endeavour to emulate is his remarkable sincerity. I know I do. Without this sincerity, too, no vocalist can achieve any measure of success.

Now, my advice to 'British Bing Crosbys' is to be great singers for themselves and forget about the styles of individual star performers. Let them sing naturally in their own natural voice, but free from 'goaty' vibrato, throat-gurgles and other forms of affectation. Let them be natural, singing the lyrics with a great deal of understanding, and living for a fleeting moment in the atmosphere of the song - forgetful of all else, including the microphone! In this way they will be able to put songs over with the deep sincerity that makes the true artist and which was responsible for Bing Crosby's greatness and ultimate success.

Editor: "...responsible for Bing Crosby's greatness and ultimate success'..... This article gets a bit woolly in places but does, in essence, sum up Bing's qualities - or some of them. But when do you think this article was written? One gets the impression that the writer had long surveyed the remarkable career of Mr. Crosby for his analysis is fairly accurate.

The stunning truth is THIS ARTICLE WAS WRITTEN FOR THE AUGUST EDITION OF A MAGAZINE CALLED "RHYTHM" - in 1934! Just two years after THE BIG BROADCAST, Bing's first major film!

And the writer? None other than one of Britain's most celebrated - and still respected - vocalists, AL BOWLLY! Actually, he was dubbed 'Britain's Bing Crosby' for a time, though in truth, he sang nothing like Bing. He was very good, had a style all his own but could only have been dubbed as such because he was perhaps our most prominent popular vocalist at the time as he himself suggests in the first paragraph of the article.

And the article illustrates just how universal was the admiration for Bing in those days....when Britain's own leading popular vocalist observed 'the fascinating timbre and the artistry behind Bing Crosby's voice was noticeable when he was one of The Rhythm Boys....'

This August 1934 edition of RHYTHM, incidentally, describes how all the famous bandleaders and radio artists in this country were specially invited to the Carlton Cinema in London for the premiere of THE BIG BROADCAST - and came away raving about Bing's singing and his performance as an actor.

And its all such a long, long, time ago; the really astonishing aspect is that Bing was still enjoying that 'ultimate success' up to just over 2 years ago....43 years later....another dimension to the unique legend of Mr. Crosby.

For younger members unaware of Al Bowlly, he sang with most British bands on recordings - Lew Stone, Ray Noble, Geraldo, Roy Fox and others, and also made solo records. He was killed, alas, by a landmine in his flat in London in May 1941.

A PAGE OR TWO WITH: DICK NETTLETON (Faringdon, Oxon).....

SAUSAGES AND MASH

Editor: An unlikely heading; I usually, like a persevering Editor, aim at suitable headings but felt I just could not improve on this.

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Some members have been good enough to let me know that they gleaned some pleasure from an article I did way back in the September 1978 issue of BING which recounted some of my clumsy efforts to get 'with it' on record-players. As my more recent efforts to get into taping have been even more hilarious I thought that these might provide the vehicle for a further article.

Among the treasures that Bing left to us is a great list of the song titles that he recorded and every Crosbyite will know the warm glow that just comes running your eye down that list. When writing an article, part of the fun is to dop into that treasure trove of a list and select a title that will also serve for the article. It is surprisingly easy and on this occasion, with the complex jargon of taping running through my mind, LITTLE SIR ECHO jumped out of the page at me and clearly I now see that THAT should have been the heading. But I'm stuck with what you see.

Our Editor described my earlier article as 'evocative', which worried me a little until I checked against the dictionary and discoveeed that I had been 'reviving memories'. Having found LITTLE SIR ECHO in the discography I could not resist just checking it against the English 78s listing. Sure enough, there it was - but on the line above was, and is, DEEP PURPLE.

That, to coin a phrase, did it! Evocation took over. Modern taping problems were forgotten and I was overwhelmed with the glorious smell - of sausage and mash. Its all right, dear reader, the Editor has NOT missed a line of type; I did say Sausage and Mash.

In the summer of 1939 I had my first holiday sans parents. They had their doubts but they finally agreed that as Bob and Lol seemed to be a couple of 'sensible lads' I could go off with them for the whole week of the works' holiday. So, one Saturday in July three apprentices set off from Manchester and pitched a tent, eventually, in a damp field near Abergele in North Wales.

In those days all mothers were female chauvinists par excellence. It wasn't just that they thought men could not cook. The very thought of men cooking never even occurred to them. I had tentatively approached my mother in the hope of picking up a few cookery hints - of the rudimentary kind, you understand. She smiled in that knowing way that only mothers can, muttered something like 'sausage and mash is quite easy' and gave me a few extra shillings no doubt reasoning that I might survive the week with the help of some Welsh fish and chip establishment.

We were made of sterner stuff, however; we had borrowed some pans and a primus stove and we intended to do the job properly, although in those days there was no TV - or Fanny Craddock. At least, not for the likes of us. I imparted my mother's parting words of wisdom on the culinary art of provisioning to my mates and, having (not without

some difficulty) pitched our tent, we set off the for the local shop. We bought bread and butter, cocoa, condensed milk and, of course, sausage and potatoes. Yes, we even remembered the salt.

We pricked and pumped the primus; peeled the potatoes, sizzled the sausages. Our quantity estimating was a little awry, however, in that we had an excellent meal and, I calculated, enough left to see us through several days.

A damp field near Abergele was about as close as you could get to nowhere. We wanted the bright lights and they were down the coast at Colwyn Bay. The next morning - after some more of our stock of already-prepared sausage and mash - we boarded the local bus. Arriving in Colwyn Bay we were drawn like three iron filings to a magnet into the first amusement park we saw. We drifted around putting pennies into slots with reckless abandon and flicking little steel balls around a series of very small holes until they, inevitably it seemed, dropped into a conveniently placed large hole. Our modern one-armed-bandit-manufacturers had nothing on the guys who designed these filching machines. If your steel ball went down the big hole you lost your penny; if the almost impossible happened and you achieved the task of getting it into one of the little holes, with a spine-tingling thrill - you got your own penny back!

And what? you are rightly asking, has this to do with Crosbyana? I'm coming to that, for we shortly discovered a new delight: our first encounter with a juke-box though it wasn't, of course, called auch in those days. At the ripe old age of seventeen I was very much with Bing and was building up a nice little collection of 78s. We conned the list of records available on the machine and - there he was, twice! LITTLE SIR ECHO and DEEP PURPLE and it happened we hadn't heard Bing sing either of these songs before.

I put in a penny for DEEP PURPLE. Listening for the first time to Bing singing a song is always a tremendous experience, especially especially if you have heard lesser men attempt it.

Our timorous tenors and bawling baritones used to sing songs like DEEP PURPLE as tamely as a Second XI medium-paced opening bowler - no swing, no variation of flight or length - and no added pace off the pitch. Bing made the deep purple fall over those sleepy garden walls as though it was <u>really</u> falling.

Bob chipped in with a pennorth of LITTLE SIR ECHO. Lol had a reprise on DEEP PURPLE. I wanted DEEP PURPLE AGAIN but that seemed unfairly biassed against LITTLE SIR ECHO so he got my penny. Bob restored a degree of equity with a penny for DEEP PURPLE and Lol had his round of LITTLE SIR ECHO.

We looked around. A queue was forming. We moved on. We wandered around the town. We looked at the sands. We surveyed the sea. We whistled at the girls. We walked up and down the pier. But inevitably that magnet pulled us back to Bing.

That was it for the week. Every day we fed on sausage and mash. Every day we fed pennies into the juke-box and listened to LITTLE SIR ECHO and DEEP PURPLE. The number of permutations on this arrangement were, of course, strictly limited but we tried them all, over and over again.

(Cont.over

We were never bored, we were happy, happy, Happy!

It was the last holiday before the War....things were never the same again, most ways, but Bing never changed. One day I will cook myself some sausages and mash, put on the record player - and I will be back on the coast of North Wales in that last summer....

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And that leaves me still looking for a title for the article on going in to tape. Hand me down my discography!

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PEOPLE ARE FUNNY: Bing wrote the foreword to a book of this title written by Art Linkletter and published in 1947 by The Country Life Press, Garden City, New York. The only reference to Mr. Crosby in Linkletter's text is a paragraph referring to the role Bing played in introducing 'transcribed' (i.e. pre-recorded) programmes to radio. The book is very funny and readers might come across a copy in the secondhand book market or in a library.

Here, however, is the full text of Bing's introduction:

> 'The fact that a backward fellow like myself is writing a foreword for a book is proof that Art Linkletter can get people to do anything. Further, with the exception of Art, Bob Hope is the only other book writer I know. (My bookmaker friends, however, are legion).
>
> The success of the PEOPLE ARE FUNNY radio program seems to be 'everbody wants to get into the act' - and Art lets them in - with a vengeance.
>
> Yes, we all like to let our hair down, and as Lady Godiva once proved, it is sometimes necessary. We are all inclined to show off. A short time ago my four sprouts amassed enough cabbage to buy themselves bicycles. Said mohey was earned by selling newspapers. (Every day they fly from the hay, dash to the front porch, snatch the morning paper, and hold it for ransom).
>
> Anyway, the little burglars wheeled their bikes up front of the shack for a demonstration. The first time around the house they yelled: "Look Dad, no hands!" On the second trip around their cry was "Look Dad, no teeth!" My alarm was brief for I realised that in the not-far-distant past I had done the same thing myself - and, as I recall, I threw in a busted collarbone for good measure.
>
> People are funny - inately, consciously and sometimes even unconsciously. As for Linkletter himself, the lad dreams up many of the mad antics and lethal pranks As for Linkletter himself, the lad dreams for we the funny people to perform on his show, it must be said in all fairness that he suffers from astigmatism of the skull. This malicious malady distorts his brain, twists his reflexes, and gives

him more notions than a five-and-ten-cent-store.

A chemical analysis of Link would no doubt disclose that he has the imagination of a Paul Bunyan, the determination of a salmon heading upstream to spawn, the intestinal fortitude of a stage mother, the diplomacy of Disraeli, and the viewpoint of the Divil himself.

So now, read on how Art and people cavort and carry on for laughs. It will prove that PEOPLE ARE FUNNY, but one thing sfill puzzles me: Is Linkletter a people?

BING CROSBY"

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A typical piece of Crosby writing, exhibiting his ever-ready neat turn of phrase and wit. Now, changing the subject, did you know that the Poet Laureate mentions Bing in one of his poems - written before he became P.L.

I'm a fraid its a rather sardlnic reference and not meant as complimentary to Bing - it would seem that Sir John Betjeman obviously regarded Bing as some new, modern, aberration and probably was ignorant of Bing's strong religious convictions. However, here it is:

"....No need to praise
The Unseen Author of our nights and days;
No need to hymn the rich uncurling spring.
For Dykes is nowhere half so good as BING"

(From THE DEAR OLD VILLAGE
published 1954

It needs to be added that Dykes was the composer of LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT.

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Editor; A substantial, and entertaining, contribution by Dick Nettleton ....Deep purple mash and echoing sausages... Reminds me of the holiday which I spent alongside a roundabout (carousel?) at Canvey Island circa 1934 simply because, the steam-organs having been replaced by electric amplification, they could belt out MAY I? and LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR by Bing all day - and they did! This was when Canvey Island was just a collection of bungalows, chalets and sheds, with horse-and-trap transport. Not the industrial complext it is today! But that 's all another story....

ARTHUR BLOOD (Derby) sent us a paragraph from an organ magazine - a question addressed to Ethel Smith, the famous organist who had a work-shaking hit with TICO TICO in the awful '50's - and believe me, your Editor, as an organ-dabbler, that record was a fantastic technical performance. Question: You've obviously played for and with the big 'stars' of the day. What is your memory of Bing Crosby?

Answer by Ethel Smith: 'I met him for the first time in Brazil. He came through and stopped at the Casino Copacabana for several days on his way to Argentina to buy horses. After we finished the session at the Colden Room he sat in and played drums with us. He was just as enthusiastic as a child! Then when I had come back to

New York and opened at the St. Regis Hotel, and wound up in California doing films, I did his show. He had a big radio show then and we did quite a few shows together and two recordings. It was very tragic about him but I think he went the way he would have wanted to go - doing something he loved.

Editor: There is something odd here, unless I am making a monumental error - especially as in the same written interview Ethel Smith refers to an occasion when she, with a 'large orchestra' was to accompany Bing. When he turned up he decided, so she says, that taking the melody down a tone and a half would be better for him and they all had to 'transpose' and found it particularly difficult though they 'muddled' thro....Our discographies are virtually guaranteed accurate and no instance can be found of Ethel Smith recording with Bing. We hasten to add there would be no artistic reason why she shouldn't have. Perhaps a lapse of memory or even getting confused with the odd transcription for a radio programme. But we seem to have no knowledge of such a thing.

NORMAN TOOGOOD (Southampton) reported the following: I wonder if any other members caught a very unusual Bing item on 20 December? It was a short cartoon film on BBC TV built around Bing sitting at a piano, singing WHITE CHRISTMAS. Bing, of course, was portrayed as a cartoon character but in a quite lifelike way and the whole thing was very well done indeed. It was by a youngster using home-movie equipment. And I was delighted to discover that it won a well-deserved prize. (BBC Manchester).

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REMEMBERED REQUEST'.....

As he awaited the arrival of his seventh child, Bing Crosby, 57, waxed pensive about the snares of parenthood. "With this new set," he said of his children by his second wife Kathy Grant, 27, "I'm going to try not to repeat the mistakes I made with Gary and Lindsay and the twins." Before the bout of self-criticism was over, the man who crooned his way to a multi-million-dollar fortune even produced a suggestion for his epitaph. "If I forget," he told Parade writer, Lloyd Shearer, "You tell Kathy I'd like this line:

'He was an average guy who could carry a tune.'".

**********"

Kathy remembered....

TIME MAGAZINE (US)
Sept 29, 1961

Bing did have this fixation about the way he 'failed' his first family. Seems a tremendous pity and surely unfounded?

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SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Under this heading we hope to chronicle the events and plans of the various local branches or associates which are springing up. The Editor will be pleased to receive reports of such happenings.

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PHIL CLARKE's Southern Ring Crosby Appreciation Socy., (affiliated of course to the ICC) held a bumper Christmas meeting on Sunday December 2nd last and we have many glowing accounts of the continuing success of Phil's enterprise. Video films of Bing were shewn as well as the inevitable crop of records. Attendances have now well passed the 50 mark and Phil is compelled to seek larger premises for his meetings. Remember, they started originally in Phil's home! His address is 69 Walden Rd., Stamshaw, Portsmouth, PO2 8PH, Hants and if you are desirous of enlisting with Phil and attending these delightful functions, drop him a line enclosing SAE.

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And perhaps a little surprisingly -- but just as welcome! - we hear that comparatively near-neighbours in Southampton are getting organised: NORMAN TOOGOOD, 91 Chiltern Green, Millbrook Estate, Southampton, SO1 4BB writes:

I feel sure you will be delighted to know that the SOUTHAMPTON BING CROSBY CLUB is now in existence! We have had an initial meeting and enthusiasm is high. May I, thro' BING, invite all members in or close to Southampton to get in touch? We've been in touch with the local press and BBC Radio Solent acquainting them with our formation; we're going to advertise too in the local evening paper. We hope to issue a regular newsletter. Our good friend, JIM NEWELL, has been an inspiration in this project. When our meetings are established we hope to invite Leslie Gaylor to be present - and perhaps in due course, you, our Editor!

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Regrettably, the last issue of BING fell behind schedule for fairly obvious reaons and this resulted in a lack of publicity for JOHN BASSETT'S get-together on October 6th last. Nevertheless, it proved highly successful - as John now reports:

Despite there being no notice on account of BING being delayed, attendance was good and the 4½-hour get-together at BINGVILLE was thoroughly enjoyed by all present. The success of this initial gathering of local members will undoubtedly result in meetings being arranged on a regular basis. In view of the limited room available attendance must be restricted to a smaller number than I could wish. Those attending included, alphabetically, Stan and Irene Austin (Midd'x)., Bert Bishop (Chelmsford) Geoff Block (Southend), Ron Chuck (Romford), Margaret Klisky, (Chelmsford) Brian Lewis (Billericay), Wally Oldfield (Rayleigh) George Patmore and his son Richard (Chelmsford).

A 'round' of record requests provided the following musical part of the proceedings:

Stan Austin:	A Blues Serenade
	Can I Forget you?
Irene Austin:	Black Moonlight.
Bert Bishop:	Happy-go-lucky you
	Shadow waltz.
	What do I care, its home!
Geoff Block:	Robins and Roses
Ron Chuck:	Down by the river
Margaret Klisky:	Tie a yellow ribbon
Brian Lewis:	If I had a talking picture of you
George Patmore:	Moonburn.

Various rare items heard on tape included the fluffed versions of THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT, the TV commercial Bing did for Shell, and the blow-up of WE'RE A COUPLE OF SOLDIERS.

The Christmas message tapes from Bing were played in chronological order, concluding with the brief greeting to the Leeds meeting in October 1977, believed to be his last recorded message. The original tapes of these valuable messages, recorded at my request, are held here at BINGVILLE and have been transcribed onto acetate discs, the labels of which are autographed by Bing with the exception of his last message taped only eight days before his death.

The meeting was brought to a close with the showing of two Mack Sennet 'shorts', I SURRENDER, DEAR and DREAM HOUSE, followed by the Bing episode from the 1964 television series, HOLLYWOOD AND THE STARS, narrated by Joseph Cotten. This has been released in home movie form and is available only through membership of a film club.

A date for our second meeting has been suggested and in all probability we will have another 'full-house'. Local members interested in attending should contact me first, enclosing SAE, to ascertain just how booked-up we are. And - a reminder to those who attended in October, the date and venue is as follows: Saturday, 1st March (6 pm start) at BINGVILLE, 15 Oast Way, Rochford, Essex, SS4 1HZ.

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Editor: I held my br4ath when I saw that Irene Austin had requested a record - for a little bird told me that she may easily have chosen a sshh...Sinatra record! In which case, despite it being a free country, I feel she may have been drummed out! John Bassett, as most readers know, edited BING for about four years - 1971 to 1975 and is joint-compiler of THE A TO Z OF BING CROSBY, THE LP-OGRAPHY and THE MINI-DISCOGRAPHY.

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Moving up-country, Midlands members are cordially invited to contact G.R. Tom Evans, 84 Brereton Rd., New Invention, Willenhall, Staffs, WV12 5LR who is working hard to organise events for Midland members. Dances and meetings have already been held in most congenial circumstances, but we get the impression Tom could rightly expect more support from the host of members we have convenient to the Midlands.

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"FROM THE BLUE AND GOLD ROOM" 32 Ferndale Avenue, Wallsend, Tyne & Wear, NE28 7NE Frank Murphy announces that Newcastle-upon-Tyne will be the setting on Saturday, May 3rd, 1980 for a very special TRIBUTE TO BING CROSBY, remembering Bing's Birthday and Frank's celebration of 30 Years of association with International Crosbyana. Frank, who now organises the BING CROSBY PHOTO CLUB and issues BING PICTORIAL TO MEMBERS (ann 1 sub £3.50p) hopes to enlist the support of all the Crosby societies here, in America and in Australia for this proposed event. His aim is to make this the biggest-ever Bing gathering; and he is hoping that Crosby fans will converge on Newcastle in their thousands. Frank promises among other things a non-stop video room, a record and tape room and a massive display featuring the world's biggest collection of Bing Crosby personal letters, trophies, &c.

The venue and times will be announced later and for the benefit of members travelling to Newcastle a special hotel accommodation service is being set up. Meanwhile an advance booking office has been arranged and tickets can be reserved by completing the slip enclosed with this issue of BING. Tickets will be £1.00 each and Frank also requests that you enclose a stamped, addressed, envelope.

> PLEASE NOTE: ALL COMMUNICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS FOR THIS EVENT SHOULD BE SENT TO FRANK MURPHY AT THE ADDRESS ABOVE AND NOT - NOT - TO THE EDITOR OF "BING", e.g. REG BRISTO.

It is understood that Ken Barnes is likely to be present to autograph copies of his book THE CROSBY YEARS. Furthermore, visitors will have the opportunity should they so desire to visit the studios of station RTN on Saturday morning May 3rd and watch his own programme being broadcast to Hospitals North and South of the River Tyne.

THE ABOVE IS CONTAINED IN A CIRCULAR FROM THE BING CROSBY PHOTO CLUB.

From America comes important news concerning a change of officers in CLUB CROSBY and in the editorship of BINGANG. As many of our members will be aware, PAT SULLIVAN and PATRICIA KOERNIG have run this US. Crosby club for a decade but now, in a newsletter, we learn that they desire (while maintaining and even enhancing their interest in matters Bing) that new personalities are introduced. All the new officers are valued members of the ICC and we wish them every success in their endeavours. We may add that, with the ever-growing devotion to Bing and his career in this country, we sometimes despair at the way the popular music scene appears in America. Music-lovers have their cross to bear! Even so, we are very well aware that there is indeed a firm basis of Crosby-admiration in the States - and where else must it be in the land of Bing's birth? - and we are very well aware of the new officers. They are : Editor of BINGANG- ALSTON W. SUTTON, Vice-Present is HERBERT J. (Herb) BOOTMAN, while MORTON B. MILLER is the new Secretary-Treasurer. We certainly wish them well in their endeavour and will be glad to include details of their activities in BING. An important request is that ALL communications regarding CLUB CROSBY and the magazine BINGANG should be addressed to: POST OFFICE BOX 8283, Sacramento, California 95818, USA. That address ONLY please. Current annual membership costs 8 dollars a year, or two years for 15 dollars. (Most members will know that currently there are slightly more than two dollars to the £). Also, it is hoped to make 3 issues a year of BINGANG instead of the two previously.

SOME MORE SLEEVE NOTES

The selection of excerpts from the sleeve notes of various albums apparently proved of great interest to members - to the extent that we have decided to present below a further selection. Some decided to treat it as a Quix; but that is not the intention for we feel it too much to expect members to be so avid as to be able to identify them! These samples do, it is felt, illustrate how the writers set about the difficult task of saying something new about Bing...

Having become so firmly and permanently a leading part of the show business scene, Bing has made it inevitable that a great many people should have a fond interest in whatever he does and a desire to savor his past - even if they happen to be too young to have any direct recollection of that past. For that reason alone it would be worth turning back the clock to the days when a young singer known even then as Bing (for that's the way Harry Lillis Crosby was billed from the very start) was still in the band-vocalist stage of his career..... (1)

(2) And speaking of good things, how can anyone forget one of the best of these - Bing. Because Bing started out a whole lifetime ago and sang his way affectionately into the hearts of millions of people around the world. Not that his style was necessarily affectionate - in fact, the notice he got in his early days was because of his forthright and aggressive approach to a song. Doomed was the light, airy tenor-like delivery of the vocalists of the 20's. Crosby came along with a new style that was to change all that and a lot of this change probably came about as a result of Bing's love of early jazz, and his intentional (or otherwise) way of singing in a style complementary to a hot trumpet, or trombone, or clarinet, or.....

In this magnificent hi-fidelity album, the man whose voice has been heard more often, by more people, than any other human being, sings a number of memorable songs....A man of infinite charm and astounding international appeal, Bing Crosby's voice is an instantly recognisable symbol of effortless music-making and casual merriment. His seemingly off-hand delivery is deceptive, however, for Bing has rarely, if ever, struck a 'wrong note' in anything he has ever done. (3)

(4) Wherever his film and record masterpieces have been set there are thousands of eager Bing Crosby devotees to pay local tribute to his almost legendary work. His unique charm dismisses the barriers of language, culture and geographic hazards with a brand of casual aplomb that is so characteristic of everything he does. Wherever there is a record-player or radiogram (of hom 'n' wind-up vintage or of modern hi-fi streamlining) its a safe bet that at

one busy Bing Crosby record is located amongst the accompanying collection! In this fresh assembly of enchanting material Bing sings of some of the places which hold special rank in his memories and where, we're perfectly certain, he is held in fond and perpetual remembrance himself.

....everything he does seems to be done in a seemingly off-hand manner. But make no mistake, it only appears that way. Crosby is a hard worker, and when necessity calls for it, he can put his mind to the task in hand to the exclusion of all other activities surrounding him. Thus he is an inspiration to all who work with him. And that list must read like a who's-who of show business. (5) Practically everybody who is anybody has appeared with Bing, whether it be in a movie, on TV, the stage, or on his radio programme, and all have the greatest admiration for him as Bing the artiste. Of course, Bing Crosby is an American by birth, but every nationality by adoption. A man such as he, an unofficial ambassador of goodwill, representing a modest and truly democratic attitude, is welcome anywhere in the free world. He may be American on the 4th July, but when the occasion arises, he can be as French as the Eiffel Tower, as Irish as the Blarney Stone, as Spanish as the bullfight, as British as John Bull, and many others besides. His versatility, both on and off duty, as it were, is almost legendary. Name it, and somewhere, Bing fits in. Apart from his film roles, his many hundreds of recordings testify to that...his life story has been set down so many times that it becomes difficult to say something new about the man, and even that is beautifully related by Crosby himself in his recorded reminiscences as heard in his disc-autobiography. But name any medium, and Bing is equally at home in all of them in song, whether it be in Western garb, in the fiery Latin rhythms of Spain and Mexico, or back to the jazz sound of New Orleans. His visits to Hawaii have inspired him in song...and he indulged in nostalgia for old Erin. The boulevards of Paris are not forgotten, along with other European countries.

(6) Bing Crosby rose up out of the band-singer class with The Crooner vogue to become an indelible legend in the world of entertainment and a living symbol of America in every corner of the world. His career has spanned a half-century showing few, if any, signs of wear and tear. ....At a time when the country was in the depths of a massive tragic depression, Bing, through the medium of radio (which was free), offered profound interpretations of melodies of the day. America at that time considered the gramophone record a luxury, yet the faithful flocked to music emporiums for their copies of the latest Bing Crosby recordings. Here then is Bing Crosby, intimate touching, singing full-voice, casually ad-libbing, interpreting love and its various dramatic aspects, and all with a goodly proportion of jazz thrown in for the profound purists of the art.

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Albums from which these 'clips' are taken are listed further on in this issue. Last line, second excerpt, preceding page may be indistinct on some copies. It reads: "in the band vocalist stage of his career.."

THRO' THE MISTS OF TIME....

BEARING DOWN

- and, in fact, bearing down to remarkable effect....

Out in Spokane, Kate Crosby experienced a thrill of pleasure as she noted the postmark on the letter she received from Bing one bright morning in May. It read "Chicago".

She knew it meant Bing had started for the West Coast - that he would be closer to her and that it might not be long before she would be seeing him again. She also noticed the stationery which proclaimed the 'Old Gold-Paul Whiteman Special Train'.

Then she read:

Dear Mother, Monday.

Well, we are wending our way westward and having a truly marvellous time of it. Our train is an all-compartment special of six Pullmans and baggage cars, with a special diner, attendants, and so forth, and officials of Old Gold, Columbia and Universal on board, together with newspaper representatives and 'yes-men'.

Since leaving New York everything has been fine. In Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Detroit we broadcast concerts to large and enthusiastic audiences. In each of these towns we were royally feted, and nothing conducive to our comfort and enjoyment was left undone. Tonight we are in Chicago for two days and thence to Indianapolis, where we appear in connection with the Decoration Day speedway races, going then to St. Louis, Omaha, K.C., Denver, and Salt Lake City with concerts scheduled in each town. Then to San Francisco for a two-weeks' vaudeville engagement and after that we will go to Los Angeles, where they plan a reception for us. Then to Universal City and work. The retinue is, of course, strictly stag and so informality prevails.

If nothing else, our return to Whiteman's employ has been fruitful because of this trip. Not only are we having a great time but my name is being prominently featured in the newspapers and in the broadcasts and I am getting a lot of invaluable publicity. What awaits us on the Coast is as yet problematical and whether we get much of a break in the picture or not I can't tell now. However, I intend to bear down heavily and really try to accomplish something worthwhile.

We figure on being in Los Angeles the morning of June 20th, so you can write me there in care of Everett. Love,

Harry.

Kate Crosby read the letter again, considering the intent of every word in this message, dashed off on a speeding train. The remark that Bing did not know what kind of a break he would get

in the picture was a little disquieting; but this was more than offset by his determined statement that he was going 'to bear down heavily'. This had a ring of resolution to it that gratified her. Harry had always been so easy-going, she was glad that he was beginning to realise the necessity for hard work when it came to achieving success.

She promised herself that she would write to Everett in Los Angeles at the first opportunity and ask him to keep an eye on Harry.

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(From Ted Crosby's book (circa. 1946) THE STORY OF BING CROSBY, with grateful acknowledgements).

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Kate Crosby is, of course, Mrs. Crosby, Senior - and you notice among other things that he was "Harry"....I wonder if, like the rest of the world, his mother did come to call him Bing?

The letter was written en route to Hollywood, a mammoth caravansarei, where the famous Paul Whiteman & his Orchestra were to - eventually - make the film KING OF JAZZ. Bing clearly saw the need to reassure his mother that life wasn't all wine and roses, or rather, that he didn't regard it as such, for he was well aware no doubt that his mother wasn't all that sure that he had made the right choice in joining the risky profession of 'show-business'. And his remark that he was going to 'bear down heavily' is not only indicative of his resolve to buckle under but also evidence of his neat turn of phrase which was to serve him so well throughout his long career.

It is certain that this 'bearing down' did not forsee the little 'peccadilo' that was to land him in jail and seriously jeopardise his appearance in the film! Apart from that diversion, however, Bing certainly did get down to it - and may in some way disprove his own theory of 'luck all the way'. And it was a nice family touch that Kate enlisted elder brother Everett's aid in keeping an eye on the ebullient Bing!

But neither Kate Crosby, nor the rest of the world for that matter, knew that within two years of writing this letter, full of affection and a desire to please his mother, the name of her son, Bing Crosby, would be famous and familiar - and loved - throughout the world. The influence of his mother weighed heavily with Bing throughout his long career and no doubt saved him from the more serious 'peccadiloes' to which he was exposed in those exciting early days, for show business is indeed a 'heady' business to young men, full of life and good spirits.

It was a happy and fortunate circumstance that brother Ted Crosby wrote this book about his famous brother and thus made available these glimpses of the early Crosby days and of the family unity, tinged with apprehension, as Bing was preparing for his meteor-like surve to world - and lasting - fame.

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In order to save members writing about this book we must regretfully say that, except for a miracle, this book is no longer available.

A VERY GOOD ROUND

--- MY LIFE WITH BING -----

Some members have remarked on the fact that BING has not carried too much on the Crosby family of recent issues. This had its well-meant reasons. Firstly, a lot of gossip that we feel is not relevant gets into the newspapers, and secondly, we strive not to get mawkish and unduly sentimental. Having said that, however, we can now redress some of the omission. The above is the title of a book by Kathryn scheduled for this year and about which she spoke to some sensible reporters in the States. One of them, MALCOLM ABRAMS, wrote the following, which are only excerpts from a lengthy article, but they will bring members up to date:

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"The world knew Bing Crosby as a breezy fellow, easygoing and whimsical. A man who enjoyed golf and a good pipe. An effortless crooner who sang and wise-cracked with equal ease. But there was another Bing Crosby as well - a man of fiery passions and quiet romanticism. It is this second, very private person who is the subject of what surely will top next year's best-sellers list - A VERY GOOD ROUND - MY LIFE WITH BING, written by his wife of 20 years...

'The title of the book came from something that someone said right after I heard the news that Bing was gone,' she explained. 'It seemed so important at the time to make it clear to our friends and the press that Bing and I did have a very good life. But the title has other meanings. It is a reference to the last golf game that he played, just minutes before his death. He won that last game. And A VERY GOOD ROUND also relates to a lot of things about our married life. Like a prizefight somebody wins a round and somebody loses a round....

"And almost two years after Bing's death at 73 from a heart attack there is no doubt that his beautiful wife is still deeply mourning her loss. 'Everything about our home,' she said, 'brings back memories of Bing. ..I walk down the front hall and all the antique furniture there was a gift from Bing when Nathaniel was born.....

"Despite the composure of the Crosby family immediately after Bing's death - Kathryn and her children, Harry 20, Mary Frances, 19 and Nathaniel 17, held a press conference within an hour of hearing the news - his passing had come as a complete shock.

"For even though he had undergone surgery for a rare lung disease four years earlier, and had tumbled 20 feet from a Pasadena stage only five months before, Kathryn always felt Bing would live well into his 90s.

"'Neither one of us ever talked about death. Bing's mother died when she was 92. I planned on having Bing with me until he was at least that. I was going to take such perfect care of him that he was going to live for ever.'

But looking back, she feels that the fall was really the beginning of the end for him. 'The stage fall is what killed him. How

many shocks can your heart take?' she asked, her eyes misting over. 'It's such a miracle that he lived at all. And I feel great guilt and great rage that I was not able to save him.'

The accident left Crosby unable to walk. A blood clot in his hip swelled and blocked the nerves to the lower spine, effectively paralysing him from the waist down. It was two weeks before Crosby could get out of bed.

"'After the fall, Bing's fear of walking, of getting back on the stage, was very real,' Kathryn explained. 'He didn't complain. He was very brave. Still, it was the first time I had seen him depressed and sad.'

> But Crosby did come back - with a vengeance. He played the Palladium in London for two weeks, taped his annual Christmas show, which aired after his death, and toured England with his family and Rosemary Clooney.

"Her son, Nathaniel, a high school senior and budding golf pro. still lives with his mother in their 40-room mansion in the Hillsborough section of San Francisco.

Her daughter, Mary Frances, married Ed Lottimer, a 27-year-old songwriter, recently amid reports of her mother's disapproval. 'I don't suppose any mother wants her 19-year-old daughter to he married,' Kathryn said, 'but certainly Mary Frances is madly in love with her husband and he seems to be madly in love with her. I'm sure they'll be very, very, happy'.

> "There is no question that Kathryn is pleased about the love life of her oldest child. Harry, now attending the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts, is carrying on a long-distance romance with Maria Ferrer, daughter of close friends Rosemary Clooney and Jose Ferrer. 'They're wonderful for each other,' she says.

Crosby's humor, his optimism, high high moral values and, most of all, his undying love for his family and his wife live on as a comfort and motivating force in Kathryn's life.

"'Most of all I think of his gallantry during his suffering,' she says, 'and the fact that he was given a beautiful death. That was very important to me at the time...and still is.'

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Editor: I would be inclined to agree with Mrs. Crosby that that calamitous fall in Pasadena was indeed the beginning of the end. True his astonishing performances at the Palladium would seem to give the lie to that; though many people thought they could see thro' Bing's stoicism. Yet when, on behalf of all of us, I wrote to Bing concerning his tremendous efforts on our behalf here in Britain, he replied by letter "...but you're wrong Reg, it wasn't hard work. It was fun. We loved it all....."

Bing is on record somewhere (tho' we didn't reprint it at the time for the reasons given above) as saying that if his daughter followed so much of the modern trend of 'living together' without the sanctity of marriage, he would disown her. It never came to that, of course. But just a few years back, in an interview with

a Scottish schoolgirl for educational TV programmes, Bing stated quite firmly that he was against early marriages - we have the tape of him saying so. Actually, he said: "I think its a very big mistake for girls to get married in their teens - too early. They get to around 24, find themselves with two or three children - and wonder what happened to it all?' Indeed a man of many parts....

One of our members, JONATHAN RUSSELL, wrote to Mary Frances to congratulate her on her marriage when it was announced here - and got the following reply:

"Dear Mr. Russell,

Thank you for your lovely note. The faith and positive support towards my life and career was heartwarming. Its wonderful to know Daddy had such good people for fans.

Thank you for caring,
Sincerely,
Marry Crosby Lottimer.

to which was added a single line:

HAPPY NEW YEAR - Ed. Lottimer.

Mary Frances has been seen recently, so we are told, in that computerised US TV programme DALLAS.

At home, Britain's DAILY MAIL carried a lengthy story about Mary Frances on Christmas Eve last, headed BING'S NAUGHTY LITTLE ANGEL, in which Mary Frances realises that some viewers may be shocked by the only daughter of a moral institution'flaunting and bedding'. But she also went on to say that at this time of the year (Christmas) the memory of her father is naturally stronger. "It is especially poignant," she said, "because we don't have him to share Christmas with. Now we are like the rest of the world....the only time we can share Daddy is on television or in his music. The last few years of daddy's life gave me an incredible opportunity to learn from him. It was such a gift to perform with him in the Christmas Specials. During the taping of the shows we used to go for long walks. Daddy was a great walker. He wasn't very demonstrative but he would hold my hand and we would walk for blocks and blocks. That was wonderful. And we'd go shopping. He had a tremendous sweet tooth and loved to stop at bakeries. It was fun and, of course, the memories are stronger at this time of the year. He really will not die for me. He lives in this world through his music and that will never die."

Her mother, Kathryn feels the same way about the Bing Crosby Specials: 'There is a lot of public interest. We did a Christmas show this year and I don't see why we should not continue. Everybody has a favourite segment they would like to see again, and why not?"

Editor: Why not indeed? To our great regret neither BBC or ITV saw fit to acquire the Crosby show for viewing here.

GOODBYE TO THE 'SEVENTIES **********

..and some old friends...

jointly by JOHN BIGNELL and The Editor

ll decades must contain their share of laughter, fun, tragedy, disaster and all the emotions the human face is subject to... But if you accept the Biblical definition of three score years and ten as mortal man's span - and if, furthermore, you accept that the 'Thirties (with a little leeway either side of that decade to include the late 'Twenties and a large part of the 'Forties (we'll discount the Frenetic Fifties and the Swinging Sixties, etc.) were a golden age of popular entertainment then it follows that the decade of the 'Seventies was doomed to have an unequal share of distinguished deaths. Talking pictures, the wonderful musicals, the legendary stars, the almost endless list of distinguished bandleaders, the growth of both the radio and therecord industry all made their contribution to the '30's and turned it into a golden age - and we mustn't forget the wonderful songwriters whose efforts remain the 'standards' of today...Cole Porter, Jerome Kern, Irving Berlin, Rodgers, Warren and so many others...

And so many were, it seems, born around the turn of the century - either just before or just after. It followed, therefore, that they 'grew up' with the century as it proceeded. They were in their twenties in the 20's, their 30's in the 'Thirties and so on. And when it reached the 'Seventies, forsooth, they were on the wrong end of the Biblical span.

So its not inappropriate, as we enter the 1980's, to take a look back over the past ten years and to reflect briefly on how those 'Seventies did take their toll of so many fine musicians and artistes of the popular music world.

There was the remarkably ironic fact that so many people closely associated with Bing also died in the decade just finished. Naturally, the sudden demise of Bing was the catastrophe of the decade. Yet, it must also be said that the 'Seventies saw the dream of thousands come true when they must, surely, have abandoned all hope of it happening. Bing came to record in London, to perform in London and elsewhere in these islands. In fact, we could almost prepare outselves to believe that he might come and live here.... and thus it came about that many thousands of British admirers saw Bing, shook his hand...and his fabulous career, although actually ending in Spain, nevertheless had its finale in a tremendous final three years in Britain. The Seventies, therefore, provided the 'high' and the 'low' of the Crosby saga for we in Britain.

JOHN SCOTT TROTTER, the most enduring and endearing of all Bing's accompanists departed this life in October 1975. It is a well-documented fact that the names of Bing and JST appeared together on more record labels than any like association. Well over three hundred commercial records and countless radio performances (with the odd film pairing) made them the most prolific partnership there is ever likely to be.

In 1976, JOHNNY MERCER, famed lyricist and record-duettist with Bing, departed this earth - during the very summer that Bing was making his historic first series of concerts at the London Palladium. In the autumn of that year, also, I was saddened to learn of the death of my very favourite female vocalist of all time - the magnificent CONNEE BOSWELL. After becoming the leading component of the great female singing trio - the BOSWELL SISTERS - Connee launched out as a solo singer in 1936. Her duets with Bing now form a very significant part of the Crosby saga - certainly in terms of sheer quality although the number of songs they did together was nowhere near as prolific as we would have wished.

Still on the Crosby scene but more domestically, we were grieved at the loss of perhaps the greatest Crosby collector of all time - BOB ROBERTS, another passing that was much lamented. I knew Bob briefly through a period when I was steadily building up my own collection but regrettably I did not visit his Crosby Room until after his death. It was a most tremendous collection and we can only deplore the fact that BOB did not live to see the completion of his life's hobby. Bing's last album, SEASONS, was recorded and issued a few months after Bob died.

Right at the start of the '70's we lost LOUIS ARMSTRONG, Old Satchmo - shortly after he had appeared on television here with Bing. Perhaps the most celebrated jazz man ever - and again, a highly distinguished duettist with Bing. Their association went back to the early 30's and Louis finally appeared with Bing in PENNIES FROM HEAVEN in 1936, and again in 1956 in HIGH SOCIETY. Thus he is on record for posterity with Bing in some of Bing's greatest efforts.

The year of 1974 saw the departure of DUKE ELLINGTON, another immortal bandleader/composer. Here the connection with Bing was more tenuous for Bing didn't record again with The Duke after that great version of ST. LOUIS BLUES in 1932, following THE RHYTHM BOYS version of THREE LITTLE WORDS in 1930.

At the end of 1975 there died LEE WILEY...perhaps many will say Lee who? But many people have the opinion that Lee Wiley was one of the finest female singers ever. I have recordings of her made in 1931 when she was just 15 years old and the sophistication and maturity of her voice even then is almost unbelievable. In terms of output, Lee's contribution to the popular recording scene is comparatively negligible, but in terms of quality she ranked in the very top league. I have most of her work contained on less than a dozen LPs...for me personally it was a matter of great regret that Lee and Bing teamed up on just one record - to produce their fine version of I STILL SUITS ME.

One of the many projects under review at the time of Bing's death was an album with the great JOE VENUTI - jazz violinst extraordinaire and a man with an immense sense of humour and zest for life and fun. Joe, who departed this mortal coil in 1978, was a lifetime associate of Bing, right from the time Bing joined the Whiteman organisation in the 'Twenties. The recorded evidence of their association remains one of my personal highlights of my Crosby collection - and let's not forget it was almost certainly Joe Venuti who was responsible for that glorious fold-up of WE'RE A COUPLE OF SOLDIERS that Bing perpetrated!

Then right at the very end of the decade, the list of deaths

received two more illustrious candidates..on Christmas Day itself of 1979, the death was announced of JOAN BLONDELL. Joan was both lovely and glamorous - and a comedienne of delightful talent. It was so good to see her turning up, seemingly little changed, in TV features in recent years, still with that infectious smile and chuckle. Featured in perhaps hundreds of films, she turned up with Bing in the fine EAST SIDE OF HEAVEN film. Lucky Bing, lucky Joan!

And then, finally, on the last day of the decade, it was announced that RICHARD RODGERS had died. As was to be expected, his death attracted much coverage on the media and again as to be expected, his post-War work on his highly successful musical shows was most high-lighted. Perhaps rightly so for they were tremendously successful and creafed a new vogue for such shows as THE KING & I, OKLAHOME, and others. But we of the Crosby world go back to the pre-Hammerstein days of co-operation...to the days when, with Lorenz Hart, the two of them, RODGERS & HART, produded the words and music for the film MISSISSIPPI and the unforgettable songs SOON, EASY TO REMEMBER and DOWN BY THE RIVER.

On the 'home' front the last ten years has seen the passing of a long and melancholy list of British bandleaders. Their only connection with Bing was that they thrived during his halcyon days, playing his lovely songs. Sid Phillips, Billy Ternent, Geraldo, Harry Roy, Eric Winstone, Jack Jackson, Ray Noble, Victor Sylvester - and MALCOLM LOCKYER. Malcolm was the only one with a direct connection with Bing for it was he who directed the orchestra on the London session for the HOLIDAY IN EUROPE album though his efforts were not the ones finally issued.

There were, of course, hundreds of other notable deaths in the decade of the 'Seventies but we have confined ourselves to those which can be associated with our principal interest. Violent deaths, dastardly deaths...no doubt there always will be. But on reading thro' the list I am forced to the inescapable conclusion that the 1970's were a watershed in my life. They will remain the years when I ceased to look up to and revere musicians and writers still with us and after which I will continue to look back upon those who have left us but, mercifully, have left evidence of their talent and artistry for succeeding generations to discover and enjoy. To those days when the accolade of 'star' had to be earned and was not indiscriminately bestowed - and trivialised. I reflect uneasily on the current scene where, it seems, all are stars....and those with the formidable total of TWO hit records are - SUPERSTARS... If its unhealthy to look back - I am glad to be a total invalid!

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Editor: A melancholy but vividly told story, perhaps? Joan Blondell...ah Joan, who came close to spoiling my teen-age for I was desperately, hopelessly, in love with her..my heart ached for her all thro' the 30's and beyond. It was tremendous when, as pointed out above, she was teamed with Bing....dear Joan, Rest in Peace as may all those others who gave us, and continue to give us, so much pleasure.

And perhaps as a postscript, we should remember that there is now just one surviving Crosby 'brother' - Bob, for Ted himself passed away in the swathing 'Seventies.

A justly popular feature of BING wherein members express their views and recount their experiences - rather startling, too, some of them!

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Reg Bristo,
7 Greenmeadow Close
CWMBRAN,
GWENT NP44 4PJ

GIL McKEE, 26 Whitehill Ave., Bangor, Co. Down:

I went up to Barry Adams's house last week and we had a bit of a Crosby night. Principal reason for the visit was to see various excerpts of Bing films via Barry's video-recorder. I'll just have to buy, steal or borrow one of these machines. As you may well imagine, it was a terrific night. My current favourite song of Bing's is MAYBE I'M WRONG AGAIN, so much so that I've been singing it on my rounds as a 'postie' and I have a feeling it doesn't meet with the unqualified approval of all at 6.00 a.m.

In fact, I was singing it going to work at 4.45 a.m. and a guy down the road stopped me one day in the afternoon. Seems he had heard 'voices' in the early hours and had told his wife, and, indeed his next-door neighbour. They told him it was his imagination. However, he heard this voice every morning at approximately the same time, so one morning he got out of bed when he heard the strains of MAYBE I'M WRONG AGAIN - and caught a glimpse of a fast-moving figure on a bike. He stopped me one afternoon and raised the matter, just to make sure he wasn't going out of his mind. I told him I just couldn't get this lovely song out of my head - and I don't think he minded too much, seeing it is a Crosby Classic.

I've had a letter from Howard Levine who had run across Michael Brooks and asked him how sales of the CBS Vol III were going. Brooks replied that 'sales could be a whole lot better' and blamed it on poor distribution by Columbia - whatever that means. So things don't look too promising for Vol IV. And that would be a great shame.

PS. Wogan has the best show of all the 'disc-jockeys' - hate that phrase. Have heard all the rest, including local radio: Gee Whis! are they bad! T.W. is the tops!

Editor: They're coming for him Friday...the mind doth truly boggle at the Phantom Dawn Warbler singing MAYBE I'M WRONG AGAIN as he drops the wrong letters in the box.;.if Gil feels like a change of repertoire suggest START THE DAY RIGHT!

Howard Levine supplies the 78s and Michael Brooks writes the notes, as you will know re. the CBS volumes. These three albums have certainly been the greatest boon we've had in years - of the grass roots material, naturally. It will indeed be a shame if a projected Vol IV is abandoned. T.W. is tops? T.W. is tops? T.W. is tops...Can it be read any other way? But its precious little commendation at that.

DENNIS KIRTLAND, 12 Swinburne Rd., Iffley Rd., Oxford, OX4 4BG:

I took a leaf out of your book last night whilst exercising my dog in the dark - tripped over an iron stake in the ground and skilfully landed on my nose on a convenient log. This saved the rest of me from more serious injury. Mind you, it didn't do the old proboscis a lot of good - but nothing broken, I am happy to say, I

was stone-cold sober too, I hasten to add. Don't go slipping around this year Reg - go on all-fours if need be. Get your wife to slip a lead on you. No-one will take any notice.

Editor: Surely a sublime case of putting one's nose where it WAS wanted...but to be serious for a moment (and at the risk of boring everyone with a 'when-I-was-in-hospital' syndrome), I was appalled whilst there to learn of the unbelievable seeming trivialityof some of the 'broken--leg-thigh' cases - my own wasn't exactly complicated. There were at least half-a-dozen women in the adjacent ward who had suffered serious fractures as a result of a dog running the lead around them and pulling them down! Others had fallen off a chair as they hung curtains, or fallen down just the last stair of a flight! It is common knowledge that everyone's bones get more brittle as they get older; but I learned in the hospital (I am the enquiring type) that it is a biological fact that womens' bones get more brittle than mens'. 'Tis a fact - so, take care, for such trivialities can condemn you to upwards of a year of misery.

NEVILLE JARRETT, 12 Mulgrave Rd., Linthorpe, Middlesbrough:

Regarding whether or not Bing ever sang SOMEWHERE MY LOVE (the DR. ZHIVAGO song mdntioned in THERE'S NOTHING THAT I HAVEN'T SUNG ABOUT) it appears in a medley of songs Bing sang on the Hollywood Palace show of 31st December 1966. So, THERE IS nothing, really nothing, that Bing didn't sing about.

PS. MCA now pressed by CBS, not EMI
Decca now pressed by Philips....

Editor: These laconic PS's are knocking me out! I am prepared to give up as to whom owns what and who presses what...thanks to Neville and all the others who answered the query about ZHIVAGO.

MRS. MARY JOINSON, 21 Salishury Rd., Werrington, Peterborough PE4 6NW:

I bet a 2oz bar of chocolate has never cost you around £2.50! That's what my long-suffering husband had to pay the other Sunday evening... we were visiting mother-in-law in Boston-on-Humber and on the Sunday evening we took the dog for a walk in the park. I spotted a chocolate wrapper on the grass - litter-bug - and suddenly fancied a bar of that delicacy. Quite unhopefully we made for the town to try and find a shop open. I felt certainly we wouldn't in a small town like that. But we did - and as we entered I spotted a rack of half-price records - and right on top was Bing's SPECIAL MAGIC OF BING CROSBY (MGM). I'd never heard of this one before and in the excitement of buying the record I forgot all about the chocolate. I should imagine its an old record because this was a little old shop which merely appeared to sell a few records as a side-line...

Editor: Ah Mary, the record IS old, yet is still current in good record shops. And we had a lot to say about it when it was first issued as BING SINGS WHILE BREGMAN SWINGS. It might be said that this was the first of the 'modern' alhums whereby the accompanying orchestra waged total war with the singer. Originally on HMV the album has been reissued many times. But it is such discoveries than can make a week-end, eh Mary?

Did I say 'modern'? It was (Cont...

recorded in June, 1956 but its almost impossible to believe that this album is nearly a quarter-of-a-century old already. Incidentally, if anyone wants to try an interesting exercise suggest they play one of the CBS Vols - any of the three - and then play BING SINGS WHILE BREGMAN SWINGS....

T. FORD, 17 Belton Rd., Leytonstone, London E11 3JD:

I wonder if you can settle an argument between my wife and myself as to how tall Bing was? To me, of course, compared with other artists, he was twenty-feet high.

Editor: Though we don't go in for the 'what did Bing have for breakfast' style, I find this query of interest if only because of the surprise I had when I first met Bing. I had, for some reason believed Bing on the shortish side. Indeed, when he was younger, shortish and inclined to be a bit tubby! Well, I certainly am, measuring only around 5' 6½"; and when I stood shoulder to shoulder with Bing for a photograph (a treasure, needless to say) it was (and is in the photograph) apparent that Bing is 4-5 inches taller than me. And it needs no mathematician to conclude that Mr. C. was close to six-feet tall- around 5' 10" anyway. And he was past the age of 70 then, when men are apt to lose an inch or two.....though I must confess Bing showed no inclination towards stoooping!

I think Mr. Ford should have given us more details of the argument with his wife - and tell us who won!

MISS PAT FORSTER, "Seasons" 12 Cavalier Close, Midhurst, West S'x:

Re the tulips in Holland mention in the last issue - the BING CROSBY tulips, I order 50 of these from a firm in the Netherlands and by a strange twist of fate, they arrived on Friday, 12th October so I was able to actually plant them as a true 'remembrance' bed for Bing. If any members are in the vicinity of West Sussex next spring they would be very welcome to call here to see them in flower - and to photograph them. End of April, beginning of May would be the time. Perhaps even 2nd May!

Editor: A kind invitation....and can spring come too soon? Not for me....the sight of swaying tulips in the spring sunshine is a delectable thought - as we shiver...

LES BRICE, 5 Rush Green Gardens, Romford, Essex: I've enclosed the list of Bing's songs at the Palladium in the 1977 seasonbut omitted all other items. With the shattering news of Bing's death so soon afterwards the Palladium engagement - the second one, that is - was sadly overlooked to some extent. But Bing was in good voice though I remember thinking that he looked far from well and at times it was obvious that his back was causing him some pain. I made a note at the time that when he reached WHITE CHRISTMAS in the medley he sat down, something he hadn't needed to do the previous year. With regard to the mention of John Joyce having a tape of the last Palladium concert if you could come to some agreement with John to have the tape issued as an ICC offer? Even if the tape was of understandably poor quality I'm sure we'd all jump at the chance of having this tape. Could you move Heaven and earth and pull it off?

(Cont....

Bing's songs were: FEELS GOOD - ROVER - ALL ALONE - THERE'S NOTHING THAT I HAVEN'T SUNG ABOUT - ANOTHER OPENING (Bing, Kathy, Harry, Rosie,) THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE SHOW BUSINESS - GONE FISHIN' and YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND (both with Ted Rogers) - NEE VIENNA WOODS (with Rosie) - the Noel Coward medley: I'LL FOLLOW MY SECRET HEART, SOMEDAY I'LL FIND YOU, DON'T PUT YOUR DAUGHTER ON THE STAGE MRS. WORTHINGTON, MAD DOGS AND ENGLISHMEN, I'LL SEE YOU AGAIN, LONDON PRIDE (Bing, Kathy & Rosie) - end of first half - NOW YOU HAS JAZZ - PLAY A SIMPLE MELODY (Bing, Kathy, Harry) - EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN (Bing & Kathy) - BABY FACE - TOOT TOOT TOOTSIE - I'M LOOKING OVER A FOUR LEAF CLOVER - SUNRISE, SUNSET - MY CUP RUNNETH OVER (I believe all the last five songs were with Kathy) - THE WAY WE WERE - CUANDO CALIENTA EL SOL - into the MEDLEY: YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE - WHITE CLIFFS OF DOVER - BASIN ST. BLUES - ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE - PLEASE - SOUTH OF THE BORDER - GALWAY BAY - SAN FERNANDO VALLEY - MILLION DOLLAR BABY - ROSE OF SAN ANTONE - I'M AN OLD COWHAND - WAIT 'TIL THE SUN SHINES NELLIE - EASY TO REMEMBER - ITS BEEN A LONG, LONG, TIME - BLUE SKIES - WHITE CHRISTMAS - OLD MAN RIVER.

Editor: We're grateful to Les Brice for his diligence in getting down these details; and it is true that, in endeavouring to cover Bing's passing in appropriate fashion, the Palladium performances of 1977 were rather neglected. Les's list will answer all those members who found the stage too engrossing to list the items - particularly Roy Leach, of 48 Lindlings, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP 1 2HE who says he desperately wants a taping.

Les's suggestion that permission be obtained from John Joyce - who, it must be said, hasn't confirmed to us that he has, in fact, a taping of the final Palladium shows - would be only part of the requirements. Bearing in mind that United Artists, not to mention K-Tel, have already issued BING LIVE AT THE PALLADIUM as a commercial double-album we must assume that they obtained copyright of these shows on record. It would not have been commercially viable, however, to issue a SECOND double-album of Bing at the Palladium as it would have been so similar to the first issue, however we may feel about it as a sentimental, or even historical, project. We would indeed be in uncharted legal waters. And to be precise, if the sentimental/historical aspects are pertinent, surely it would be the BRIGHTON show that we want on record? This was, in fact, the final public performance, as we all know.

It should be said that many members are intrigued at Bing's inclusion of a Noel Coward medley. This was entirely new ground for Bing and undoubtedly a truly 'British' gesture to his audiences.

A little conumdrum: The lynx-eyed have spotted the change in your Editor's postal code from NP4 3NR to NP44 4PJ - some have asked if it was an error? No, the Post Office saw fit - just after we had new cards, letterheads, etc. to give us notice that the original coding hadn't been adequate for the area and would we please note our new post code? Here is the conumdrum: How is it, when readers spot this so quickly, that after so many, many years, at least 75 per cent of the letters I get are addressed to: Bristow, Bristoe, Bristowe? 'Tis odd, is it not? Its the simplest form of the name, of course, BRISTO!

Mentioning EASY TO REMEMBER in the programme above, what a magical couple of minutes that was on Dec. 16th (Sunday) when we saw and heard Bing singing this lovely Richard Rodgers song from a MISSISSIPPI film. The whole programme was a tribute to Richard Rodgers....

MISS ETTY GITS, Izegemstraat 60, 4826 BG Breda, HOLLAND: I found it very interesting to read the article BING AND THE LYRICS by Mr. Nettleton. It was amazing to read that Bing is mentioned in so many songs. I'm proud to have some of them in my collection. There are also a few Dutch songs in which Bing is mentioned, but unfortunately I haven't got copies of them yet.

I would enjoy it very much to correspond with any members. My age is 18. Perhaps you could put this request in the magazine - it would be great.

Editor: So happy to oblige, Etty...but what a thought for Dick Nettleton! Bing'mentions'in Dutch songs, German songs, French songs....the field widens! As you can see, Etty writes beautifully in English. And her handwriting is crystal clear. Altogether, a delightful correspondent.

LEN HAWKINGS, 18 Sturdon Rd., Ashton, Bristol:

Regarding SONGS OF A LIFETIME, I wonder as to the various remarks and criticisms, had it been possible to have had the album issued without prior knowledge of the added orchestral tracks, would people have listened to it completely unaware and enjoyed it as it was presented as opposed to 'looking for faults'? After all, who looked at Bing's hair-piece to see if they could spot the'join'?

Editor: Original thinking. Ignorance would perhaps more have added bliss!

ARTHUR HOLMES, 33 Grange Hill, Midd'x, HA8 9PG:

The CBS Vol III is really stunning. I've played it a dozen times already and it really defies superlatives. Six of the songs I don't possess on record although some of them I do have on tape. And to think that just a few years ago I knew nothing of them! WALTZING IN A DREAM, LET'S TRY AGAIN, SOMEDAY WE'LL MEET AGAIN. Great songs, as are the others - but I do think that HOME ON THE RANGE stands out even among such wonderful material. This is a 78 I do know, with BROTHER CAN YOU SPARE A DIME? HOME ON THE RANGE must come into any 'top' list of Bing recordings; and that is saying a lot because the 1939 version is first-rate by any standards. But the breath-taking power, the faultless diction, the way that glorious voice glides as effortlessly from note to note in the earlier recording is - well, breath-taking!

MY MELANCHOLY BABY from the soundtrack of BIRTH OF THE BLUES is another song I find words hard to describe. The issued record is excellent, of course, but I can so easily recall that scene in the film as Bing picked up the little girl. It always seemed to me the rest of the cast sat awe-struck as Bing seemed to put such feeling, such pathos, into the rendering.

Editor: Arthur's letter is included because in quite coincidental fashion he has encapsulated in one letter the views of so many others. Literally scores of letters have been received, picking out the HOME ON THE RANGE track on Vol III (CBS). Perhaps not surprisingly, it is a masterly performance. And the soundtrack version of MELANCHOLY BABY is regularly enthused over by members over the years. It was a touching scene that Bing handled so beautifully. As for the voice on that occasion - well, one does run out of superlatives!

The following letter will be of particular interest. We were very pleased to hear from DEREK C. PARKES for he is one of the really prolific - and informed - of our members and has been associated with Crosbyana since goodness knows when! It is a letter which might have been put in the form of an article and will delight the members who like delving into the real intricacies of recording:

Various confusions have been creeping into the Bing/Buddy Cole material which I believe I can correct and perhaps even enlighten members interested. Most of the recordings were done from about 1954 to the early '60's. I have even earlier Buddy Cole Trio material from when Buddy was playing for John Scott Trotter and was given a featured 'spot'.

Obviously, over such a long period various studios must have been used, plus changes in equipment which inevitably were bound to have resulted in substantial changes in tonal quality. Much of the Bing/Rosie series was recorded piecemeal. The vocals were indeed recorded with a simple accompaniment and subsequently Buddy Cole multi-tracked these recordings, adding additional rhythms - especially with organ - and as you said, mainly at his home where he had some very sophisticated - for that period - equipment in addition to various organs.

Unfortunately, and contrary to what was said in BING, the hiss in recordings comes mainly from tape. This was especially true at the time when the Buddy Cole material was recorded. Tapes were far inferior to the excellent ones we have today, and although interesting effects were obtained by multi-tracking - <u>each additional track introduced more hiss</u>.

Noise-reduction systems, e.g. Dolby were almost certainly not available to Buddy - and to contradict Les Gaylor, Dolby transfers cannot remove noise once it has been recorded. It can prevent is with Dolby in, and it can also minimise the addition of more noise on dubbing, or cppying either tapes or discs. Noise can only be removed by obviating those frequencies which correspond to the noise <u>itself</u> - usually high frequencies for hiss, low for hum - at the great risk of also removing the music which may have the same frequencies as the noise!

> An equaliser could be used for this, and no doubt Ken Barnes used one, not only to minimise the noise but also to adjust the tonal balance so that all the tracks sounded similar and both the original and the Pete Moore additions matched in tone and musical characteristics.

I think it is true to say that Dolby A would normally be used to prevent the addition of noise to more recent recordings, but, as with Dolby B, which most of us have used, non-Dolby material can be played with Dolby in. This would remove hiss - but it results in the loss of much treble.

I have 70 x 1½ hrs. of Bing, Rosie and Buddy Cole on tape and have found re-edited versions of the same song, alternative takes and tonal changes of the same recording from one programme to another. All this indicates that there was much copying from tape to tape, with differing spoken introductions, often over the music. The amount of noise, therefore, would depend such a lot on precisely <u>which</u> tapes Ken Barnes picked up.

Finally, I would like to add that I think you were a bit misleading

over the 16" transcriptions. I have well over 100 and all but two are recorded laterally. Fortunately, 'hill and dale' (vertical) cut discs can be played with stereo cartridges but the 78 stylus must be used for most. I have only one microgroove transcription - four complete programmes -

> The interesting aspect about these discs is that some start at the outside and some at the inner-most groove. This is in part to minimise tonal changes when changing discs in the middle of a (radio) programme. Finishing at the centre and starting on the outside produces a noticeable 'brightening' of the tone. Going from outside to inside, inside to outside, and outside to inside (i.e. 3 x 10-minute sides = ½hr show) does not prevent tonal changes but they are less obvious.

Editor: There will be those technically-minded members who will delight in Derek's exposition of a tricky subject. Others will be looking at it rather blankly! But it goes to show just what has to be taken into consideration when re-recording and transcribing for radio - at which, as we pointed out, Bing was a pioneer. In these days of cassette-recorders and music-centres we tend to get the idea that dubbing (or copying) a recording is simply a matter of pressing a couple of buttons. And so it is - if you're not a specialist! But even a non-specialist can tell that Dolby does indeed lessen the 'brightness' - that is, the all-round tonal quality, giving it a slightly 'muffled' effect, if you like, in the same way that ill-use of the bass and treble controls can vastly upset tonal quality, giving the music a 'flat' sound as compared with the original recording.

Derek's explanations also emphasise just what a job was done by Ken Barnes and his colleagues on SONGS OF A LIFETIME.

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We also learned, with deep regret, from Derek Parkes, that a long-time Bing collector and admirer in the person of JOE HALL of Bow, London died almost a year ago. We had no idea of this, perhaps accounted for by the fact that it was almost the same time as I went into hospital last year. But Joe was known to a lot of the older members; ill-health had prevented him from getting about much but he retained his Bing-interest right through.

And another member, CLIFF BRAND, of Heathfield, East Sussex died suddenly...a letter from Mrs. Brand told of a Saturday morning car-trip to the shops. They had trouble with the car en-route and Cliff set off for a garage on foot. His wife sat in the car for a couple of hours before, getting worried, she set off....

Our sincere condolences to the relatives.

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May I ask...no, may I request? NO! May I beg members to make sure I have their addresses correctly - please print in block letters to make sure. A lot of BING's seem to be going astray... this especially applies to overseas members whose form of writing the address is often different from our methods. Please!

A HAPPY ADDITION TO "SOCIAL AFFAIRS & EVENTS reported by BOB JONES (HEBBURN)

A CHRISTMAS EVENING WITH BING:

An evening with Bing was held on Saturday 8th December last at the Springfield Hotel, Gateshead by North-Eastern members of the ICC. The evening began with the inevitable Bing records followed by a showing of the film TWO FOR TONIGHT presented by John Joyce in the form of video-cassette, BUT, not via a TV set. John had obtained a video projection item from a colleague of his and was able to show this film on a screen measuring 5ft x 5ft!

The event was run for congenial reasons, the desire to get together and not for profit. Thus an excellent meal was provided for £3.25p per person and this was the sole charge for the whole evening's entertainment attended by 50 people. Record followed the excellent meal and - tape of Crosby songs was played throughout dinner.

After the meal it was back to the video-room to see THE CHRISTMAS YEARS, the show screened on ITV at Christmas 1978. The evening was a big success - especially when John Joyce announced that he would be presenting another film show on February 16th next at the Springfield Hotel, tickets £1.50p, with all proceeds going to the Princess Mary TINY LIVES appeal to help purchase miscellaneous equipment.

Furthermore, the North Eastern members of the ICC are holding another dinner on the evening of Saturday 3rd May 1980, again at the Springfield Hotel. Any members in the N.E. who missed the previous show are cordially invited to contact either me, BOB JONES, at 39 Gladstone Str., Hebburn, Tyne & Wear (Tel: Jarrow 897370) OR JOHN JOYCE, 21 Birchfield Gardens, Low Fell, Tyne & Wear (Tel: Gateshead 878761, or Gateshead 770404.

The Newcastle Lions, with whom we are associated, travelled the streets in various parts of the North East in the weeks before Christmas on a coal wagon! This had been fitted up with large loudspeakers and Bing Crosby records were played non-stop. This enterprise amassed the sum of £370.00 - donated to the above charity.

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Editor: A fine, tangible, enterprise - well done!

The albums from which the sleeve-note excerpts were taken (see earlier article this issue) were:

1.	Young Bing Crosby	RCA RD-27075
2.	A Southern Memoir	London SHU8489
3.	Bing in Paris	Ace of Hearts (AH122)
4.	Holiday in Europe	Bruns. LAT 8505
5.	Bing sings for Children	Ace of Hearts (AH139)
6.	Wrap your troubles in dreams	RCA LSA 3094

Can anything new be said about Bing? Supposing there was a NEW album proposed, could YOU write the sleeve notes? If so, let us have your ideas - we'll print a selection!

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TRADING POST

The feature wherein members may advertise their wants & disposals.. records, tapes, books, photos &c.

Members should endeavour to limit their advertisements to not more than 6 lines. Should you have lengthy lists of records involved invite stamped, addressed, envelopes for lists. We rely on the good faith of our members regarding these transactions. There is no charge for space here as we feel it is a tremendous boon to members:

JIM REILLY, 100 Brettenham Rd., Walthamstow, London E17 5BA: Has tapes of BELOVED HYMNS (Ace of Hearts) but desperately wants the record if possible.

BERT HAMBLETT, 58 Park Rd. Meols, Hoylake, M'Side L47 7BQ: I have Nos. 39 to 43 incld. and 51 to 57 incl. of BING for sale at 25p each plus postage. Also GOLDEN YEARS Nos. 8, 10, 18, 19, 20, 22-26, 32-33 36, 38, 40, 42 to 46 and 50 and 51. Sam price.

FRANS VAN DER KOLFF, Top Naeffstraat 8 hs, Amsterdam, Holland (Phone 020-737866) would like to get in touch with collectors owning a copy of THE STORY OF BING CROSBY by Ted Crosby. My copy has a few pages missing which I would like to obtain in the form of photo-copies. I would also very much like to get in touch with other Dutch members with a view to exchanging news and views and Crosby material on record, tape, video, &c. Thanks for help! (Frans is a very keen member and an eccellent correspondent - in English - Editor).

ED PACHOCA, 500 South Vine Str., Shamokin, Pennsylvania 17872 USA: I have about 10 mint copies of the Kraft Anniversary LP (special) I am willing to trade, but I possess all the recent issues of Crosby discs and in fact I have close to 700 LPS in my collection. I'd be interested in Crosby 44rpms sets, EPs and 10". While primarily a Crosby man I do have a strong liking for Dick Haymes and seek his recordings on Ballad LPs 1, 2, 3 and 4. I have about 100 Crosby LPs of all types and from a lot of countries that I use for exchange. They are spares, of course, for Bing is No. 1

RON MILLS, 18 Percival Rd., Feltham, Midd'x wants to know if anyone has a copy of a book SO YOU WANT TO BE IN THE MUSIC BUSINESS by Tony Hatch. Pay your price and postage.

FRANK WILGAUS, 138 Blundell Ave. Cleethorpes, South Humberside, DN35 7RJ needs to be in touch with a taper-correspondent (reel or cassette) for he has a formidable list of 'wants' including: Bing interview by Wilfred Thomas; Connecticut; Don't Ever be afraid, Don't let a good thing get away; From Monday on (20.1.28); I couldn't care less; Ichabod (1947); Ida I do; Incurably romantic, If I had a hammer (Basie); Like someone in love; Live a little; My favourite story; Narration St. Luke 1960; Open up your heart; Pass that peacepipe; Rosaleen Say one for me (3 versions from BBL 7335); Step to the rear; Suspense; The Bathtub Scene; The Bombardier song; The eagle and me; The Headless Horseman (1947); The old chaperone; The river; The second time around; reading of The Star Spangled Banner and others....

LARRY FARRELL, 136 Ballsgrove, Drogheda, Co. Louth, Eire hasn't been able to get a copy of THE ONE AND ONLY BING if anyone can supply.

FRANK L. TARRAN, 6 Adeline St. Greensborough, Victoria, 3088, Australia has asked us if we have any knowledge of an appreciation society or such in honour of the great bass-baritone PAUL ROBESON. We do not, but like so many people, admire this great artist. F urthermore, is anyone interested in exchanging tapes of his songs?

JACK LARKINS, 68 Tobruk Avenue, West Heidelberg, Victoria, Australia, 3081 has two hard-cover copies of CALL ME LUCKY which he is willing to exchange for sheet music of the 30's with picture covers, e.g. Astaire & Rogers, Alice Faye, Bing, dance bands, Shirley Temple &c, OR is open to suggestions. Anyone interested is invited to write.

> We have to admit to a sorry error in the last issue. Sorry for hopes that were raised and then dashed, and sorry for the extra work we involved ourselves in, despite attempting precautions to avoid it. It concerns our reference to the fact that we had a small stock of the CARPOZI book, and also a few of the ONE & ONLY BING - the former numbered 22, and the latter 6. We were snowed under with applications! This was a surprise because we really thought most people would have had these two books by now....but the miracle of the two loaves and five fishes (or was it the other way around?) would have needed to be emulated to meet the unexpected demand. We do sincerely apologise to those whose hopes were raised only to be dashed - and it need hardly be said that if you wrote for one and received no reply we apologise again. To those who - especially in America! - disregarded our 'precautionary' note asking for money NOT to be sent well, it involved us in the work of returning same which we had endeavoured to avoid. We can repeat what we said in the last issue: the Carpozi book was available in some Woolworths stores ONLY. It may still be worth keeping an eye open for it. In the interests of fairness we did intend leaving a fortnight between the posting of BING and receipt of apppications. Tho' all copies of BING were, in the event, posted within 36 hours, in 3 days it became apparent that that fortnight would lead to another shambles. Sorry once again.

MISS PHYLLIS M. WOODWARD, 109 High Street, Pershore, Worcs. WR10 1EQ would very much like the 78 of HOME ON THE RANGE if anyone can help. Also MOON RIVER 78 or 45 sung either by Bing or by some other good singer.

> Editor: The easiest way to get HOME ON THE RANGE is on the CBS VOL III we've eulogised elsewhere; MOON RIVER was, of course, a big hit for Andy Williams - and I think a chap in Britain, also by the name of Williams, did well with it. I don't recollect Bing singing it.

HERB BOOTMAN, 3714 Poe St., San Diego, Calif. 92107 USA puts up the idea of a TRADING POST for video-cassettes. The way that v-r is growing makes it almost inevitable! Herb has more than a score of Crosby films, shows &c. bond rallies, and the special tribute to Bing on San Francisco TV during the week of his death, and the Wm. Holden narrated tribute. Herb is interested in EXCHANGES, not sales. And adds: On Betamax ½" Format (2 & 3 hrs). So, we'll set up a special, separate, section for video-recording transactions.

MIKE SLIPMAN - LEGEND (MUSIC) Legend House, 153 Francklyn Gardens Edgware, Midd'x: is providing a boon for members by importing records on a wide scale. Post & Packing for 1 LP is 65p; add 15p for each additional album:

NEW ISSUE: Bing's Party (an excellently produced album) Artistic P01 £4.50p

SPECIAL OFFER: Greatest Hits of Bing produced by the J. Norris Corp. in association with MF publications: double album only £5.00
RADIOLA 1100: Command performance with Bing and Sinatra £5.25
V Disc VC 5018: Bing on V-discs. Japanese import, limited edition, few copies only - price as yet unknown.....
TANDEM 1903: Mail Call with F. Sinatra, Bing and Judy Garland 2 x 30 min radio shows £5.25
MF 207/5 Ten Philco radio shows on five LP (box)incl. Post £17.00
SPOKANE: 13 Kraft Music Hall 1942 £5.00
14 Bing in the 30's Vol 2 £5.00
15 Holiday Inn/Bells of St. Mary's (radio versions) £5.00
16 Music hall Highlights (really excellent LP) £5.00
SOUNDTRACK 104: Blue Skies (film soundtrack) £5.25
SOUNDTRACK 112: Holiday Inn (Bing, Fred Astaire) s/track £5.25
SUNBEAM 502: Distinctly Bing Vol 1, Similar to CBS Vols 1,2 £5.00
SUNBEAM 504: Distinctly Bing Vol 2 and 3 in period. £5.00
CBS CL2830: Paul White & Orch with Bing/Rhythm Boys £5.25
MCA 177: Shillelaghs & Shamrocks £4.50
MCA 519: When Irish Eyes are Smiling £4.50
MCA 15017: The Small One/The Happy Prince £5.00
Liberty LOM 16002: Road to Hong Kong £4.75
Amalgamated 147: Bing and Hoppy £5.00
148: Bing & Sinatra (Christmas show) £5.00
151: Bing & Marlene Dietrich £5.00
221: Bing & Maurice Chevalier £5.00
237: Bing & Dorothy Lamour £5.00
239: Bing, Lucille Ball, with Spike Jones £5.00
Wonder LP: 314 Ali Baba & 40 Thieves (Bing) £4.75
DRG DARC 2-2100 25 years from the vaults of MGM records contains Lazy River with Bing/Louis - mainly non Bing but an excellent album for nostalgia fans (double album) £10.00
CBS 53748 Bing Crosby Collection Vol 3 £4.00
(Few copies of Vols 1 & 2 left) £4.00
(NOTE: These are the US issues and sleeves)
Capitol SM 11732: Bing Crosby's Christmas Classics incl. Winter Wonderland, Little Drummer Boy, Littlest Angel &c. Suggest order early for NEXT Christmas!! £4.25
(This originally issued on Warner years ago).

It will be seen that Mike Slipman offers an avenue for those specialised records that do not appear in ordinary record shops. And certainly not in departmental stores, Woolworths &c. The prices represent a good deal on imported albums.

Mike invites a SAE for a full list of his nostalgic records.

There is no business or commercial connection between the Circle and Mike Slipman; we just feel he does a good job for collectors with the rarer records.

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DON McKENZIE has removed to 6 Farne Walk, Hutton Gate, Guiseborough Cleveland and will be glad to meet or correspond with neighbours.

To those members who have enquired about sending THE CROSBY YEARS to the States, and to American members, the publishers have stated that the book WILL be published in the US. Which will save a deal of trouble and expense.

A late note from Tom Evans (see SOCIAL AFFAIRS &c) says that the Midlands group have changed their venue and are now meeting at THE ANCHOR, Bridgeman Street, Walsall. Vido-recordings are now on the agenda!

JONATHAN RUSSELL, 10 Roxburgh Rd., Westgate-on-Sea, Kent, CT8 8RX (which is a change of address from last issue) can supply all three seasons of PHILCO shows, totalling no less than 108, at £1.75 per cassette. SAE will bring list. US/Canada 5 dollars. Reproduction is very good indeed. Each cassette contains two shows.

MRS. RENEE CHESTER, 48 Milton Rd., Hanwell, London, is interested in buying /exchanging video-cassettes; she also has a large collection of rarer material on sound cassettes she is prepared to copy for those building collections. SAE for further details.

MR. ARTHUR BLOOD, 597 Osmaston Rd. Derby, DE2 8NE; and GEO. HARWOOD, 5 Glebe Rd., Hemingford Grey, Huntingdon, Cambs PE18 9BS are two more members willing to help out with good quality tapings, especially reel-to-reel. Always enclose SAE with enquiries please.

For cine-film addicts: COLLECTORS FILMS, Bartholomew Square, Ironmonger Row, London, E.C.1 offer DREAMHOUSE (B & W) 1 reel, I SURRENDER DEAR (B & W) 1 reel, both at £6.95p. A LL-STAR BOND RALLY, 19 mins. B & W £13.80p (many stars and brief appearance by Bing); WALTON FILMS LTD. 87 Richford St. London, W6 7HN have SING BING SING, and BLUE OF THE NIGHT (Mack Sennetts) price not known. HIGH SOCIETY 1 x 400ft (20 mins) from P.M. FILMS 39 Windsor End, Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 2JN (£29.50) and from CRESCENT FILMS, 104 Roundhills, Waltham Abbey, Essex, EN9 1UP at £29.95 (other firms offer this more expensively). BELLS OF ST. MARYS B & W 126 mins. £95.00 from Derann Film Services Ltd. 99 High St. Dudley, West Midlands DY1 1QP; plus a new one ROAD TO BALI in colour at £79.95. A note in the MOVIE MAKER of January by one Bill Davison reads:

ROAD TO BALI: A couple of fellas who had screen charisma - Bing Crosby and Bob Hope, together made a series of movies which are affectionately remembered by cinema fans...(there follows a resume of the plot of BALI)...rich colour and excellent sound complete this nice memento of the famous duo. Should you not require this longer version, then Derann will shortly be releasing a two-reeler with a n emphasis on the musical routines...

> Records, tapes, video, cine films, - where's it all going to end? And there was a time when we used to guard ONE 78 per month if we were lucky! The film news kindly reported by Mrs.Margaret Dutton, 10 Claygate Rd. Wimblebury, Cannock, Staffs WS12 5RN.

PAUL BENN, (a prominent member of the International Al Jolson Society as well as ICC) reports he acquired ROAD TO BALI - and ran it six nights in a row! "The magic of Bing and Bob just pours from the screen," he tells us delightedly.

ROB JONES, 39 Gladstone St. Hebburn, Tyne & Wear NE31 2XD offers tape recordings of Bing &c. Anyone interested should enclose a large foolscap envelope with a 15p stamp for large catalogue of Crosby shows soundtracks plays, curiosities etc. etc.

THE GUINNESS SUPERLATIVES - or, THE GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS:

A couple of national newspapers recently reported that the above publication was going to nominate Paul McCartney as the world's most successful recording artist with 200-million records sold.

This prompted our good friend FRANK TOOMBS, Cone Verge, Beech Avenue, Lower Bourne, Farnham, Surrey to drop them a short note which read:

> "If you do then you will tarnish the Book's reputation for accuracy because the record is held by the late Bing Crosby with over 400-million records sold - as indeed your 1977 edition confirmed!"

To which the Correspondence Editor replied, thanking Frank for his letter:

> "This is a difficult category in many ways where audited figures, as opposed to Public Relations Company claims, are not always available but this section of the Guinness Book of Records was completely updated last year and is, we believe, correct as far as can be ascertained. The recent award was made to Paul McCartney on three counts. These were for the most ever gold disc awards; most successful song writer; most successful recording artist. The figures on which these awards are based come from the Recording Industry Association of America as we find this source to be the most authoritative among many other award-giving agencies. In our 1980 printings we do make a point of saying that no detailed audit of Bing Crosby's global 'lifetime' sales from his Royalty reports has ever been published (the same applies to Elvis Presley) and this absence of collated data obliges us to be cautious. In sum the recognition given to Paul McCartney is based on the most ever gold disc awards as authenticated by the R.I.A.A. Your letter has not, however, been entirely wasted as we maintain separate files for claims on behalf of both Bing Crosby and Elvis Presley and your letter will be added for future reference."

In turn, I wrote to Guinness's, emphasising Frank's point - and also asking if they were aware that aeons ago Bing was awarded a platinum disc marking sales of 250-million and named as the First Citizen of the Recording industry - and that it was reasonably believed now that Crosby's total sales were probably in excess of 400-million? Furthermore, how many gold discs would Bing be credited with in respect of, say, WHITE CHRISTMAS? Yet we must concede that there is some substance in what was said about official returns being issued. Perhaps they didn't think about them in Bing's hey-day! There are few veteran Crosby admirers however, who will accept that SWEET LEILANI was Bing's first million-seller. Even allowing for the fact that record-players, or gramophones, were not nearly as prolific as they are these days - and have been for 25 years or so - most old-timers (if you'll pardon the expression) will always maintain that records such as BUDDY CAN YOU SPARE A DIME, LOVE IN BLOOM, PLEASE, JUNE IN JANUARY, HOME ON THE RANGE surely sold a "million". Its impossible to believe otherwise; and there were many others, too. In fact, people bought Crosby records when they didn't own a gramophone! I know - I was one of 'em. Used to take them round a friend's house - and put them in the pool!

I received a reply similar to Frank's but adding they would be enquiring further into the matter.

HERE AND THERE - a miscellaneous round-up of interesting items....

An item in several papers: 'Bing Crosby has been dead two years but MCA records reports a million orders already for his White Christmas disc for this festive season. This will bring the all-time total for Bing's recording to 46 million copies - not even the Beatles or Elvis come close to that for a single record.' I like the 'not even' bit... certainly WHITE CHRISTMAS was heard in this back-quarter in the run-up to Christmas in various shops....

EARLIEST IS BEST

Reading Junior Vieww column last Friday, I was interested in Louise Barton's comments that the quality of today's records are not as good as they were.
This made me think of my Daddy's Bing Crosby collection. It dates from 1926 to 1979 and the sound quality of the early recordings is really very good.
I saw Bing Crosby in concert at the London Palladium in 1977 with my parents, and thought the White Christmas man was wonderful.

ANN WAGSTAFF (15), Hornchurch, Essex.

This appeared in a national newspaper and Ann (well on the right lines!) is the daughter of our very enthusiastic member, TREVOR WAGSTAFF.

We have a letter from non-member ELIZABETH BURNS, 25 Avonmore Gardens, Avonmore Rd., London, W14 8RU: I have 17 Bing Crosby 78rpm singles on the US Decca label which I am going to sell. They are all in mint condition. Naturally, if possible, I would like them to go to a fan. I wonder therefore if your organisation has a newsletter or any publication where I might advertise these for sale.....

Printed as received - may be useful. Make up your own minds!

IMPORTANT! The A to Z of Bing Crosby is in the process of revision and scheduled for republication in the reasonably near future - in answer to many queries.
ALSO: We have a project on ALTERNATE TAKES, diligently compiled by COLIN PUGH, ready to be printed. We have a snag here in not really knowing what demand there is for this. To some members they are manna from Heaven; others couldn't care less provided they have the song. Some of the 'alternatives' are quite slight, e.g. Bing sang 'has' instead of 'had', or 'where' instead of 'when', but others are <u>quite</u> pronounced. The whole thing does make fascinating reading on Bing's varying delivery of lyrics. We feel constrained, however, to print a limited number and anyone who feels strongly he/she must have it it will help if they let us know. To be certain!

MRS. MARGARET DUTTON, (already mentioned in TRADING POST) - "My husband and myself have been to several meetings of the Midlands Branch and enjoyed them immensely. Their first dinner and dance was a great success and provided the novelty of dancing to tapes of Bing records, which we have never done before...we have films, tapes and are now planning video shows...I see you mention Terry Wogan and to be fair to him he always speaks very well of Bing and often plays HIGH SOCIETY tracks which he calls his 'favourite musical of all time'.....

Editor: Oh, all right then - three cheers for T.W.! Mine are the Bronx variety! But note the Midlands success....

BING'S MOST MEMORABLE RECORDING SESSION - some more choices:

NEIL O'BRIEN, 4 Wychbury St. Spreydon, Christchurch 2, New Zealand:
11.6.56: BLUE ROOM/JEEPERS CREEPERS: I'VE GOT FIVE DOLLARS, 'DEED I DO: THE SONG IS YOU: NICE WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT.
29.12.43: IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU: SEPTEMBER SONG: SAN FERNANADO VALLEY
18.4.45: IF I LOVED YOU: CLOSE AS PAGES IN A BOOK: I LOVE YOU TRULY: JUST A'WEARYING FOR YOU.
14.11.46: AS LONG AS I'M DREAMING: SMILE RIGHT BACK AT THE SUN:THE ONE I LOVE...

MR. R.A.MORRIS, 35 St. Ives Grove, Leeds, LS12 3RR: I have always regarded the session you named (21.2.35) as Bing's most memorable. Probably because I saw MISSISSIPPI in my early youth and it made a great impact. All great songs but if I had to pick one it would be DOWN BY THE RIVER. In this song all Bing's qualities are demonstrated to the full - range, power, tone, expression. This song had the lot.

A little request from Mr. Morris:I would like to know if anyone has sheet music of THE KISS IN YOUR EYES/I STILL LOVE TO KISS YOU GOODNIGHT/ LIZA(THE CLOUDS WILL SOON ROLL AWAY. Only offer cash - cannot part with any Crosby material!

LES STREET, 8 Wyfan Place, Mynachdy, Cardiff:: John Bignell did a great job, getting one to think about sessions. My favourite and greatest is the one of 14.8.35 - FROM THE TOP OF YOUR HEAD/I WISH I WERE ALADDIN, TAKES TWO TO MAKE A BARGAIN, TWO FOR TONIGHT, WITHOUT A WORD OF WARNING, I WISHED ON THE MOON - but a close second is that of 13.11.35 - SILENT NIGHT: SAILOR BEWARE: MY HEART AND I: MOONBURN....in fact, 1935 is my favourite Bing YEAR.

ERIC MOORE, 5.Irwell House, Aigburth Vale, Liverpool: I would plump for 25.2.34 LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR: ONCE IN A BLUE MOON: GOODNIGHT, LOVELY LITTLE LADY: MAY I? Our aim, adds Eric, must be to obtain the release of all the Decca material in chronological order on double albums at a reasonable price. Or is this wishful thinking?

Wishful or not, its a wonderful thought...

WE LEARN ON GOOD AUTHORITY that the BBC have acquired six more Bing films ..including BLUE SKIES. Seems Miss Kathryn Mansell, Feature Film Dept., Villiers House, BBC London, W.5. is the 'lady in charge'and a line to her might hasten screening.....

BING Nos. 9, 10, and 12 are wanted by MR. F.B.WIGGINS JR., 5608 North 34th St., Arlington, Virginia 22207, USA to complete his collection.. he will accept Xerex copies and willing to pay fair price.

BUSTS, MEDALLIONS, MIRRORS, RECORDS, BOOKS - are all making demands on the purse just now....we have heard from MR. W.H.Ewert, Wood Nymph, 7 Elfin Drive, Ferdown, Dorset, that he has seen a hand-painted porcelain bust of Bing's head in the window of IDEAS (GIFTS) Ltd., 10 South Molton Street, London W1y 1DF - at a price of £69!

THE BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY under the energetic drive of KEN TWISS continues to pour out newsletters and other literature. We've reported before its aims: to focus on the family, the art and the life of Bing Crosby. The project is now a registered corporation and the prime target is the acquisition of Bing's birthplace in Tacoma, built by Bing's parents in 1903. The Society has been allocated office space in the Old City Hall in Tacoma and is really 'in business'. Civic dignitaries have shewn great interest and both the State of Washington and the City of Tacoma are now involved in seeing that there is a living memorial to Bing in Tacoma. Like most societies, however, it has an urgent need of donations and while we have already stated our awareness of the demands on financial resources just now - and with

the economic situation continuing to deteriorate - we nevertheless recommend that those who can join, or donate, to the Society do so:

MR. KEN TWISS, THE BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PO BOX 8013,
Tacoma, Washington, 98408.
U.S.A.

A tremendous event is planned for next May 2nd; dinners, golf tournaments, lectures, concerts are being planned to raise funds.

The annual subscription to become a member is 10 dollars (just under £5). Clearly something of what the Society is aiming at should exist and I know that any assistance Bing's thousands of admirers in the UK and Europe generally would be warmly appreciated, even though it must be said at this long distance, donations are perhaps the only way we CAN help.

Our member, MR. A. SAMPLES, has been making enquiries concerning a Bing Crosby 'mirror' - y0u know the kind of thing - mirrors with a picture on that used to be seen in pubs! Or hairdressing salons! It is a fashion that has been revived carrying pictures of singers and film-stars. He has been in contact with Mr. Walton, of ASPELL, SAGERS & CO. LTD., 15 Tresham Rd., Orton, Southgste, Peterborough. We feel unable to adopt this with so much else going on but it seems such a mirror could be produced with a picture of Bing and as an example, a 12" x 12" mirror in a chrome frame would cost about £5.00 thought for a society/club such as ours the price could well be cheaper. The big snag is, however, a minimum of 500 orders would be required to make the project worthwhile. Frankly, we feel members would not be too enthusiastic about a mirror costing that much - with so much else to consider. If we are wrong - let us know and if over 500 seems a possibility we will pursue the matter.

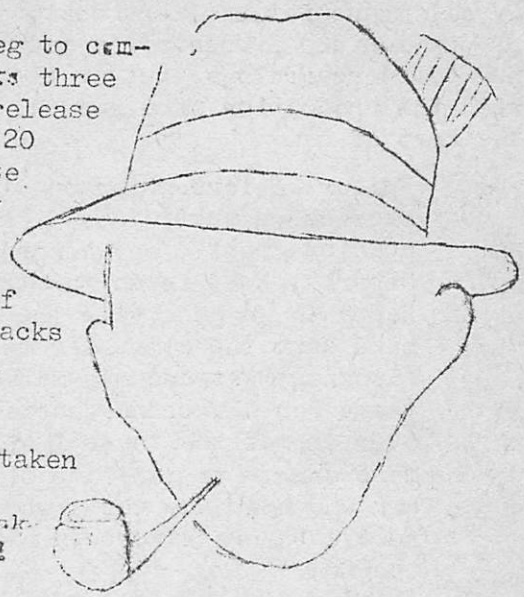
GIRVAN PATERSON, 6/23 Paddington Rd., Oakleigh, Victoria, Australia 3166 sends greetings to all members ffom 'Down Under' and wonders about BING IN THE 80'S: As we enter the first decade this century that won't actually have the physical presence of Bing I can't but help wonder how the legend will stand up throughout the 1980's. It will depend on the availability of recorded material, films, books, and so on. Hopefully there will be re-releases of records that have not been so readily available during the past decade or longer. Maybe some more worthwhile books on the man and his career. But, I think the biggest breakthrough could be in VIDEO!

It seems the 80's will be the home video decade as more and more people axquire these sets. Thousands of pre-recorded cassettes are becoming available and there is certain to be Crosby material made available. Most significant of all could be the introduction of the Video-disc - these are played thro' the TV set - and cheaper than the present video cassette recorders. Already available in America the video disc could become the biggest item of home entertainment revolution of this or any other decade when it is launched worldwide.

Editor: It does seem we are on the verge of a breakthrough such as envisaged by Girvan - for whom thanks for good wishes! It seems, however, that as in the case of records and sound tapes/cassettes, a degree of international standardisation is needed to give more confidence to intending purchasers. At present it seems to be a bit of a wilderness lacking the interchange of matsrial between differenly-manufactured recorders. No doubt it WILL be ironed out. It always has been.

KEEPING SOME OF THE GOOD THINGS TO THE END! The always-appreciated record review by BERT BISHOP

KEEPING TRACK



In the last issue I was invited by Reg to comment on the 'ethics of issuing tracks three times' - a direct reference to the release of an album provisionally entitled '20 Great Songs' from the Ken Barnes-Pete Moore stable and the also provisionally promised Readers' Digest boxed set of all 72 tracks involving Bing and Buddy Cole with added orchestra, both of which would have been repeating many tracks from the issued double album SONGS OF A LIFETIME.

In a quarterly magazine one can be overtaken by events, or made to eat humble pie by unfulfilled prognostications; oftimes taken to task for things one says in print! Thus it would seem, to undertake a record review in a magazine devoted entirely to an almost wholly committed fraternity is fraught with many pitfalls without the need to tangle with anyone over commercial ethics.

However, I'll not dodge the issue as I hold the belief that personal opinion and the unhindred right to express it is an unchallengeable democratic right; anyway, surely a personal point of view, if even it is occasionally in conflict with another's opinion, is of greater interest than a string of meaningless sycophantic platitudes fit only for erstwhile 'fan' magazines. Happily, this is a magazine for discerning enthusiasts with a fairly fearless Editor and a readership quite prepared to speak their minds on confroversial Crosbyana and allied subjects if the situation arises.

Our circle, so far as material things are concerned, is based on built-in obsolescence and the current musical scene is no exception. The buying public have only themselves to blame for this for it is easier to drift with the tide than swim against it in open revolt against any kind of shoddiness. Thus, survival in the commercial world means cheap goods for a quick, ephemereal sale. Spend too much on production and advertising and your goods will be too highly-priced to see a return, let alone make a profit. This appears to have been the case with SONGS OF A LIFETIME. Too expensive at £7 for the record-buying public whose interest was captured on the TV advertising. To us, 36 brand new Bing tracks for that money was one helluva bargain - but its not paid the bills for Phonogram. A trade advertising journal said that £400,000 was spent on the promotion of that Bing 'doubler'; production costs must have run it up to close on £½-million. To quote Ken Barnes: 'We've got to get a lot of mileage out of these tracks'.

So they will be packaged in different ways over the coming years - to be with us in one form or another for a very long time, I hope. Even in the 30's and 40's couplings on 78s were varied to bring a 'freshness'. Certainly they were in the catalogues for many years - but they were single records with just a couple of tracks. Our present system of reissue in a different sleeve, and sometimes with a different compilation, seems an acceptable variation in this transitory marketing age.

Until there is any kind of marketing stability if ever again - and one would have to re-educate the general buying public which has no knowledge of high street equilibrium - I for one will welcome the release and re-issue of Bing recordings in any kind of compilation knowing that unless the company concerned is going to make a profit there will be none at all. By all means let us exert whatever pressure we can to ensure quality of production and presentation and continue to press for the reissue of long-neglected recordings; but at the same time remember that everyone concerned with the production of a record goes to work to earn a living - just like the rest of us.

Editor: Before going on with Bert's review of the new/reissued records we must, accepting Bert's view of the expression of opinion freely, say a word or two. It seems to me that, quite clearly, Bert is saying that not only should we be willing but happy to go on buying the same record over and over again to make sure the companies make a profit for their misjudgement, mismanagement and mis-marketing! Of these strictures on companies there can now be no doubt - the largest companies are now falling over themselves to sell off the record part of their giants for a mere song - to the extent that now it is very difficult indeed to say who now owns what, who presses for whom and so on. All true record buyers have been sacrificed over the past 10 or 20 years in the frantic search for the fast buck single. And what are we left with? Punk!! And now they begin to sell off their 'record interests'! Who can really be surprised? I long for the days of Bing predominantly with Decca - and Geoff Milne making the selections.

Furthermore, the 'transitory marketing' Bert refers to was surely IMPOSED on the public, not by the public on the companies! It is very evident that unless one buys a record within a week or two of its release one is informed that it is DELETED! Thus, we had members paying £7 for SONGS OF A LIFETIME - while others were able to get it for less than half that because it was in the 'deleted' section! We used to feel aggrieved at the duplications when they involved just one or two tracks on an album! And I can say that overwhelmingly mail - and considerable mail at that - has been dondemnatory over the proposals. One letter, just one, paraphrases Bert's views.....as for misjudgement, just look at the 20 GOLDEN GREATS album! Still, as Bert says, we gotta be democratic and express our views!

This doesn't mean I do not appreciate what has been involved in Ken Barne's valiant work and speculation. Far from it: and while not 'in the business' as a professional, I would suggest that the issue of SINGLE albums from the 76 tracks would have been much the better and more profitable line to take. BING IN THE 50's, TOE-TAPPING BING, THE 'NEW'BING, BING THE ROMANTIC, SMILE WITH BING and so on, choosing songs that would fit those categories. THEN mixed compilations would have also been more acceptable to follow at intervals. However, now we return to Bert Bishop ——

GONE FISHIN/MOONLIGHT BAY MCA 538 UK 45rpm - The familiar rainbow label states that this 'single is taken 'From the MCA album Twenty Golden Greats MCTV 3' and features Bing in the ever-popular duets with Louis Armstrong and Gary Crosby respectively.

WHITE CHRISTMAS/GOD REST YE MERRY, GENTLEMEN MCA 111 UK 45 rpm
The annual reissue of this classic coupling seems a firm fixture in the commercial Christmas calendar. Just a plain sleeve this year.

(Cont. over

"20 GOLDEN GREATS" MCA MCTV 3 UK Mono £4.49 (Available on cassette)

Swinging on a Star	You are my sunshine
If I had my way	Stardust (1939)
In the cool, cool, cool of the ev'g	Sam's song
Moonlight becomes you	Sweet Leilani
Dear hearts and gentle people	Be honest with me
Wrap your troubles in dreams(1939)	McNamara's band
Don't fence me in	Pennies from Heaven
Please (1940)	Just one more chance (1939)
Gone fishin'	The Spaniard that blighted my life
Where the blue of the night(1945)	White Christmas(1947)

With a certain amount of imagination and not inconsiderable publicity, MCA Records launched yet another 'best of Bing'-type collections on the British market. Unfortunately, most of the imagination is in the sleeve and presentation rather than in the content, which follows, seemingly, the idea of taking fifty or so of Bing's best-known songs and making annual permutations with a hard-core of some half-dozen 'million-sellers', presumably because of their guaranteed sales potential.

Its nice to have the 1939-40 versions of some of his earlier hits, but what a bad master has been used for JUST ONE MORE CHANCE! My 78 is quieter than this track. Inevitably, too, there are the errors - and quite serious ones - as far as collectors are concerned. There may have been many who would have bought this LP entirely on the strength of it featuring the 1940 version of BLUE OF THE NIGHT with the Paradise Island Trio as advertised on the inner sleeve. But its the '45 Scott Trotter track that we get. Similarly do not be taken in by the 1942 recording date for WHITE CHRISTMAS - I'm listening to it now - for its the regular 1947 re-recording that's offered here. I think it should be said that we will never get the 1942 version from the copyright owners because it sold so well that the original 'master' wore out; hence the fairly faithful re-recording five years later. But the differences can be ascertained in the first couple of lines. BE HONEST WITH ME is most interesting for me here. One of my early 78 purchases that was coupled with IT MUST BE TRUE - an overlooked record, amongst many I might add.

A familiar 30's publicity photograph fills the front cover to perfection, set off by a rather uncharacteristic signature. Apart from the natural-colour photograph Oxford & Cambridge blue dominate in lettering and background. Titles are comprehensively credited on the outer cover; the inner has notes by well-known Crosbyphile Chris Ellis - I wouldn't think Mr. Ellis committed the date errors. By dialling 01-409-2961 one could be connected to an advertisement for the album and hear Bing sing PENNIES FROM HEAVEN, MCNAMARA'S BAND and BE HONEST WITH ME - the second time in recent years MCA have used this device. There was SUPPOSED to be an intensive newspaper/magazine campaign, but I didn't note any myself. But MCA did take the golden opportunity to advertise nine other Bing albums currently available, printing the sleeve picture of each on the inner sleeve under a heading of THE CROSBY COLLECTION. It represents a fair cull of most aspects of Bing's recording career with the notable exception of cowboy songs. But there is still a lot of material that could be issued, thematically or otherwise. A letter to Chris Ellis c/o the MCA address on the sleeve from every member - might well do some good. It certainly could do no harm.

Editor: Les Gaylor, Colin Pugh, Trevor Wagstaff and yours truly are among many who have submitted detailed lists of such material in the past couple of years - BUT IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE NOW, we must infer. But, keep on trying!

MAIL CALL Tandem Records LP-1903 USA Mono

(cont over

Love, love love
Amor
The Groaner, the canary, and the Nose.

I love you
You're the top (with Hope & Sinatra)
Something to remember you by.

Two wartime sercice shows of half-hour duration make up quite a nostalgic package featuring not only Bing bu such as Judy Garland, Bob Hope, Frank Sinatra, Arthur Treacher, Jerry Colonna and Jimmy Durante. The comedy is corny and dated but there's a historically interesting hrush between The Groaner and the Thin Grin on Side 2, and this is probably the better side as it features a nice duet on the last track involving Bing and Judy. Miss Garland, the 'Schnoz' and Bing make up the threesome of the last title on the first side. Dating from 1944 the sound quality is quite good and the sleeve gives greatest prominence to Bing and Judy by way of half-plate photographs. One cannot honestly say 'not to be missed' about this LP as tapings of these programmes have been around for a long while. A vol 2 is also now available.

BING'S PARTY — Artistic - ART 001 — UK Mono

Love is so terrific
But beautiful
Dance, ballerina, dance
Introductions including
  Somebody loves me
  Someone to watch over me
Gershwin medley:
  'Swonderful
  I've got a crush on you) with
  They can't take that away) Peggy
    from me) Lee
I've got rhythm
Saturday date (sith Gloria Woods)
Some sunny day
Civilisation
Wonderful
To see you is to love you
Down by the river

Selected and recorded by Christopher A. Piric at the Swing House, London, and marketed by Submarine Records, 63 Whitehall Park, London N19 3TW, this excellent LP is currently available from Mike Slipman (see elsewhere this issue). It is a well-balanced compilation of tuneful song and cut above the average dialogue that has been selected and nicely edited from more than one of Bing's radio shows. His party guests include trumpet-player Manny Klein, Buddy Cole, Joe Venuti, Oscar Levant (the latter two characters being natural wits as well as musical virtuosi) and singers Peggy Lee and Gloria Woods. Apart from two tracks by Venuti and Levant its Bing all the way - and the fidelity is very good.

The sleeve is sombre and difficult to read; green on purple for the track details. The frontispiece illustration is a champagne bottle and glasses in front of a menu that lists the tracks by title only. Generally rather poor graphics that do not reflect the purple patches of Crosbyana engagingly united in this musical get-together. I unhesitatingly recommend this one.

THE BING CROSBY SHOW - with guest FRANK SINATRA Special Project Vol 1
Presented by The Sinatra Society of Australia, PO Box 123, Clayton, Victoria 3168, Australia:

Side 1: The Bing Crosby Show for General Electric, 21st March, 1954
" 2: " " " " " " " 28th March, 1954

Selections from these two shows have appeared on Italian Joker SM3612 but this is the first time both good shows have been on LP unedited. They come complete with advertisements (which I DO like for completeness - there was a misprint to the contrary in the last issue of BING) and the sound quality is all one could wish for. I regret I cannot help to obtain copies; they are available only thro' the above Society (to whom grateful thanks for their tribute to Bing - or The Victorian Bing Crosby Society, PO Box 422, South Melbourne, Victoria 3205, Australia.

BRAFF PLAYS BING 'SWINGING ON A STAR' VOLUME 1 Pizza 5501 Pizza Express Ltd UK 29 Wardour St London W.1.

Swinging on a star	Go fly a kite
Old folks	Please
Did you ever see a dream walking?	All alone
Pocketful of dreams	You're sensational
Moonlight becomew you	Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ral
Pennies from Heaven	White Christmas

I must point out that Bing is NOT HEARD on this LP. It is entirely an orchestral album from jazz cornettist Ruby Braff who here leads the Neil Richardson Strings in yet another fine tribute to Bing that was recorded in London, November 1978 and produced by Peter Boizot, the founder of the Pizza label. The well-known jazz buff Peter Clayton has penned the extensive sleeve notes that split the kudos between Bing and Braff on a 50-50 basis. There are two inset pictures of Bing on both front and rear of the cover.

TRIBUTE TO BING CROSBY: Vintage Recollections from LEN WILTON and The New Rhythm Boys: Stereo UK SRTX/79/CU565 Obtainable from: M.O.M., The Old Forge, Wrotham Rd., Hook Green, Meopham, Kent (Tel: 0474-812325) (by the Editor, following Bert Bishop)

By quite a coincidence, we have received another tribute to Bing; this is a one-off production by a considerable Crosby admirer, LEN WILTON, who at a cost of well over £4000 has not only underwritten this album but sings on it. Again we have to say BING IS NOT HEARD ON THIS RECORD.

Sweet Sue	Please.
I surrender dear	St. Louis Blues
Gonna love you till the cows come home	Lazy Bones
Brother can you spare a dime?	Just a gigolo
Someone stole Gabriel's horn	She reminds me of you
Moonburn	Sweet Georgian Brown

So what can we say? It is a beautifully recorded album technically - stereo you will note. Len makes no attempt to imitate Bing but does sing in an engagingly colloquial style that would be Bing - if he had the tone, pitch and timbre! That's not meant unkindly; Len sings well in the Bing idiom without imitating Bing, and its most pleasing. Anyone who knows the Midnite Follies Orchestra and other session groups, will instantly recognise the quality of The New Rhythm Boys who play, and do NOT sing, e.g. Digby Fairweather trumpet and cornet; Keith Nichols, piano; Mike Piggott, violin, Denny Wright, guitar; Bob Taylor, bass and others. A quality aggregation. There are notes on the numbers, telling when and with whom Bing originally recorded them. The cover is brown and beige, the front showing a picture of what I would describe as a Bugatti sports car, redolent of the 20's and 30's. Steve Taylor was on the engineering side - and wasn't he the chap associated with Ken Barnes's productions?

We can say that it is an excellent album to listen to, highly reminiscent of Bing and clearly a sincere tribute to the Old Maestro. It costs £4.75p if you feel you can buy it on the basis of the foregoing. Needless to say, it is not a profit-making enterprise, but I gather Len would be content to get some reimbursement from his outlay! Here we go again....it IS a good album. And a very tangible tribute by an obviously dedicated admirer.

LES BRICE of Rush Green Gardens, Romford was one of those incensed at the misleading information on the sleeve of 20 GOLDEN GREATS regarding WHITE CHRISTMAS and BLUE OF THE NIGHT - the main reason he bought the album was mostly on account of the dates given. So he wrote an angry letter to MCA - and his wrath was almost turned away by a remarkably soft answer! For MCA admitted the errors, handsomely apologised for the disappointment - and offered either reimbursement of the cost, or any album he liked to choose rrom their dgtalogue. In case you care to follow suit!

A last-page addendum to KEEPING TRACK by Bert Bishop:

STAR GOLD - 2LP set: GERMANY MCA 0682-060: 0082-060

Here we have an album of some considerable importance to collectors as, to the best of my knowledge, it features the only known issue of an alternate take, i.e. A GAL IN CALICO. Having listened to it I can confirm it is positively a different take and is almost certainly the previously listed 'rejected' take of the song. Other worthwhile reasons for acquiring this set are the rare-to-LP titles POINCIANA, PEOPLE WILL SAY WE'RE IN LOVE, OH!WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MORNING and Cole Porter's I LOVE YOU. But having said this it must also be said that while we have the address we do not know either the price OR whether MCA Germany are prepared to export! The cover is coloured light golden and dark brown, with on the front a 50's 'cheeky' picture of Bing...it carries an error inasmuch it says SAN FERNANDO VALLEY was recorded with the Buddy Cole Trio instead of, correctly, John Scott Trotter & his Orchestra. Titles:

Deep in the heart of Texas
Moonlight becomes you
People will say we're in love
Oh what a beautiful morning
Poinciana
San Fernando Valley

I love you
I'll be seeing you
Amor
Long ago and far away
You belong to my heart
On the Aitcheson Topeka &c

Clearly a leaf could be taken from the book of MCA distributors on the Continent - Italy and now Germany have produced more imaginative albums than we are getting here.

Symphony
Sioux City Sue
South America, take it away!
A gal in calico (alternate 'take')
Ballerina
Faraway places
Riders in the sky
Mule train

Chattanooga Shoe shine boy
Quicksilver
La vie en rose
Harbour lights
Moonlight bay
When you and I were young Maggie blues
Domino
In a little Spanish town.

(My thanks to all members who send news for KEEPING TRACK)

Editor: We've had two or three reports that three of the Warner Bros. 'gang' or singalong albums have been reissued as CROSBY CLASSICS on the HMV label but have no concrete details. Indeed, one member reports he has picked them up in a sale! Oh, and the address for the doubler above is: Metronome Musik GMBH, Uberseering 21, 2000 Hamburg 60, WEST GERMANY.

WILL THE MEMBER who sent the Editor a cassette (some months ago) entitled DR. CROSBY'S CURE ALL - GUARANTEED TO CURE THE BLUES please get in touch as I have lost the accompanying letter - and it could be one of four! Thanks....and I acknowledge an interesting tape from ALASTAIR AIREY of London with the subtle - and delightful - title of CALL US LUCKY!

Cri de coeur from FRANK WILGAUS, 138 Blundell Ave. Cleethorpes, South Humberside I am having the temerity to try and catalogue the radio shows; have just completed a handwritten list of all the material that I know of from first broadcast on 2.9.31 up to the end of the Last KMH on 9.5.46. I have hardly any of the material from the first Kraft on 5.12.35 up to the beginning of my tapes, starting 7.10.37 and as the missing period covers the Jimmy Dorsey years I would love some information though I am not optimistic, as dear old Bob Roberts didn't have it. Am about to embark on the Philco shows, 108 in all I believe. Later will come the Old Gold prior to 1931....listed in a Bix book

Editor: Bert Bishop tells me in a hurry that on the BING'S PARTY album the sleeve states DOWN BY THE RIVER was included as IT HAD NOT BEEN COMMERCIALLY RECORDED BY BING!!! PS. I returned, shakily and stiffly to work on Monday, 14th January....and it snowed in the afternoon!